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ABSTRACT

Intended for English teachers early in their careers and for teachers retraining to teach English, and applicable to English/language arts classrooms across all grade levels, this guide offers practices drawn from classroom experience and from writing project experience that implement a tenable, successful theory of learning to write. The introductory section to the guidebook discusses traditional theories about how students learn to write, writing as a process and as rhetorical choice, and the multiple functions of writing, and lists the premises about writing instruction upon which this manual is based. The first section focuses on prewriting activities such as logs, brainstorming, outlining, and oral activities; while activities in the second section concern various aspects of the writing process, including fluency and decision-making in writing, choices of rhetorical stance and content, and organizational patterns. The activities in the third section center on revision, proofreading, and evaluation after writing; while those in the fourth section present ways to highlight student writing to give classroom writing a realism usually lacking. Activities presented in the fifth section stress writing to learn in the content areas, and include writing to learn and writing to test learning. The last section of the guidebook is a source file for teachers and includes variations on book reports, composition activities, sample editing and response forms, journal starters, and framing patterns. (HTH)

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THE WRITING PROCESS IN ACTION

A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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PREFACE

This book grew out of a handbook project that was a joint venture of the Area 3 Writing Project, directed by Laura Stokes, and the Education Department of the University of California, Davis, with the guidance of Dave Wampler, head of teacher education. It is intended primarily for English teachers early in their careers, and for those teachers who are retraining to teach English. However, the concepts and applications developed here are applicable to the English/language arts classroom across the grades.

We acknowledge with gratitude the contributions of the California Writing Projects, especially the Bay Area Writing Project and Area 3 Writing Project, and the many teachers from whom we've learned—fellows in the writing projects and our teacher colleagues—several of whom are cited in this handbook for their specific contributions.

Finally, many thanks go to Janet Turner, who laid out, typed; edited, and proofread our manuscript with the painstaking care and attention to detail that mark all her work.

In preparing this handbook, we jointly planned the content of the document, generating ideas and approaches; we individually prepared drafts of several chapters; and finally we worked together to critique and revise on the way to a final draft. In the revision stage not only did we make major changes in emphasis and organization, but we also arbitrated differences in voice and tone. We discovered that we learned about teaching writing in writing about it. We trust that reading the handbook will be instructive and helpful to you who are teaching young people to write.

Jackie Proett
Kent Gill

INTRODUCTION

As teachers of English and language arts and therefore as the professionals responsible for teaching young people to write, we know that writing skill is critically important to school success for young people, and deemed by society as well to be of central importance. So our very best efforts, based on the most appropriate theory of learning to write, are the least these young people have a right to expect. In this handbook we offer practices drawn from our own classroom experience and from the experience of our Writing Project fellows to implement a tenable, successful theory of learning to write.

Traditional Theories about How Students Learn to Write

First, we might review some theories of learning to write which have widely informed the programs existing in schools and those portrayed in textbooks, but which both research and practice suggest are insufficient. You'll probably recognize these theories in your own school experience, as both student and teacher.

The theory of frequency says that much writing practice—for instance in journals and diaries, even if unmonitored and uncorrected—will result in growth in writing skill. Yet the research record reports that growth cannot be substantiated from frequency alone.

The grammatical theory of learning to write hypothesizes that knowledge of structures and the rules for combining them will result in students' becoming writers. Neither a half-century of negative research evidence nor much pragmatic negative classroom experience has laid this notion entirely to rest.

Then there is the idea that students learn to write by having their writing corrected. Yet classroom experience says that students seem to gain little from the miles of red ink administered by their writing teachers, and research fails to find a correlation between correction and improvement in writing ability.

Finally, some writing programs have been driven by the idea that students learn sentence types and paragraph models and phrase structures (the building blocks, if you will) and then organize them by some sort of plan into coherent wholes. This theory of instruction founders on its attention more to form than to substance.

Maybe these theories of teaching writing were not so much wrong as they were too narrow, leaving out too much and attending to only one aspect of the process. Our search, at any rate, has been for a broader, more inclusive sense of the writing act as a basis for planning to teach it.

Writing as a Process

Today we tend to think of writing as a complex intellectual-linguistic process involving the recursive application of a wide range of thinking skills and language abilities. Conceptualizing the process as a series of steps, we can focus on the techniques and tools writers need, the knowledge they must develop, and the choices they must learn to make—at each of the steps. From this understanding of what writers must be able to do, we can begin to devise some teaching strategies, some instructional activities to teach usable information and skills. The theory of writing as process, which informs most of this handbook, is showing great promise in classroom practice.

The process theory proposes that writers practice different skills and undertake different activities at each of three productive stages.

Before they write. Writers get warmed up, they choose a focus, they gather and record ideas and details of ideas, and they begin to sort out their data, seeing how the data fit together in useful ways. This stage is a time of discovery and of recall.

It is rich, productive, and extravagant. And there are ways to facilitate these activities, ways that students must be taught if they are to do them most successfully.

While they write. Writers need to get their ideas recorded into some sort of tentative, first-draft shape as easily and quickly as possible. Fluency with written English is critical to this stage, as is the knowledge of what choices are available and what factors need to be taken into account in choosing among them. Writers must learn how to turn streams of thought and ideas into coherent written streams, and they need to have much experience in making choices and in seeing their judgments work effectively in the written products. These tasks are specifically amenable to instruction.

After they write. Writers will learn that writing benefits from being scrutinized again (and again) after that first draft, from revision supported by the positive, informed response of outside readers and by their own rethinking and revising. This stage involves redrafting, which responds at the content level, and editing, which works at the linguistic level. So writers need to learn how to review a draft with an eye to revision, both for themselves and for their colleagues; they need to learn to be editors. Both are complicated skills which require much learning and much teaching.

A schematic view of the process of writing is shown in figure 1.

Writing as Rhetorical Choice

A second theoretical concept underlying the practices suggested in these pages is that writing involves the making of informed rhetorical choices—about content, about organization, about linguistic structure, and about diction. A writer makes these many choices based on the internal logic of the piece. For example, characterization may require the use of dialect, the establishment of point of view, or a detailed description.

But rhetorical choices also depend upon external circumstances such as purpose and intended audience. If persuasion is intended, the writers will present their best arguments. If the reader is markedly unsophisticated, simplicity of vocabulary and structure would be called for.

Training in making these choices effectively involves the following:

making the range of choices explicit,

exploring the criteria governing choices,

giving student writers much experience in making these choices in specific writing situations, and

developing a feedback structure so the writers develop a sense of how appropriate their rhetorical choices have been.

Over the period of the school years, rich experience with rhetorical choice can allow students to approach a maximum level of sophistication through experiment, adjustment, and retrial.

The Classroom Writing Program

This handbook contains an extensive collection of practices and ideas for teaching writing. While these practices vary in immediate applicability, depending on the nature of the specific learner, of the teacher, and of the class, they have all been used successfully in classrooms known to the authors. A significant question, however, is how a selection of practices can be crafted into a coherent, sensible program for a given range of students in a specific school. We suggest below some principles to guide this selection:

1. Research suggests that neither guided composition on an occasional basis nor frequent unguided writing produces marked growth in writing skill. But experience would strongly argue for the combination of *frequent,* clearly purposeful, *guided* writing experience.
2. Students need to produce more writing than a teacher of classes of twenty-five to thirty can possibly evaluate carefully. Some compromise with the practice of thoroughly marking every paper is necessary.
3. Students can profitably practice the steps in the writing process (brainstorming, focused timed writing, sentence combining, small-group editing, etc.) one at a time, but they also need to experience the entire process on a single writing project in order to develop a sense of how to work from start to finish on a paper on their own. When the steps in the process are undertaken separately, these steps need to be connected to students' understand-

Before Students Write

Content and Idea Building

Observing	Brainstorming	Dramatizing
Remembering	Clustering	Reading
Researching	Listing	Mapping
Imagining	Detailing	Outlining
Experiencing	Logging	Watching films and other media

Development and Ordering

Developing with details, reasons, examples, or incidents
Ordering by chronology, space, importance, logic
Classifying
Applying a general truth to a specific case (deductive)
Generalizing from supporting details (inductive)
Structuring by cause and effect

While Students Write

Rhetorical Stance

Voice: Who am I? How do I feel? What do I know? How sure am I?
Audience: Who's listening? What are they ready for? What help do they need? How are they feeling?
Purpose: What do I want to happen? What is likely to result? What effect do I seek? What am I willing to accept?
Form: What form fits this message?

Linguistic Choices

Specific, concrete word choice
Figurative language
Sentence structure: length, opener, verb structure
Sentence type: simple, expanded, complex, compound, cumulative
Syntax: phrase and clause structures, word order; connections and transitions; modification and subordination

After Students Write

Revision

Getting responses: editing groups, read-arounds
Raising questions, expanding, clarifying
Testing against criteria; using a rubric
Proofreading and polishing

Highlighting

Sharing	Posting	Mailing
Publishing	Filing	Reading

Figure 1. The process of writing

ing of the whole process so they can see how each step can be independent but also integral in the production of a final written piece.

4. Although writing is a legitimate homework activity, all elements of the writing process should be undertaken at some time during class so the teacher can coach and monitor progress. Real teaching must continue after the assignment is given, through all stages of the process.
5. Writing is a tremendously complex activity involving the simultaneous application of a whole series of intellectual and physical activities. It is important in the classroom to break these activities into manageable segments so the learner has a chance to handle them suc-

cessfully in some consecutive fashion (e.g., clustering for ideas, then seeking coherence through some logic of organization, then identifying controlling elements of stance, then drafting paragraphs for peer review, and finally revising in light of valid criticism).

6. Teachers and curriculum experts have long sought the ideal linear sequence for the writing program, asking what logically must precede what in a course or a series of grade levels. This search has apparently not been successful, since there is no clearly accepted linear sequence for writing skill development, either in textbooks or curriculum guides.

   In fact, since writing is a holistic act, one requiring the application of the whole range of skills to every writing project, we could not expect to find a step-by-step schema to define the instructional program. Instead, a recursive model seems more appropriate, one which gives students experience with most of what a writer does early on but which then circles back periodically to give the maturing learner another, perhaps more sophisticated, experience with the skill employed earlier.

Multiple Functions of Writing

An important corollary to the process view of writing is the notion that writing serves many functions, well beyond the common assumptions of writing as communication and writing as record. More broadly viewed as an intellectual activity, writing takes on functions of discovery, recall, organization, classification, connection, and evaluation, all important operations. So we'll also explore here some implications for writing as a vehicle for learning in the content fields, where its broader range of functions becomes critical.

In this handbook we hope to demonstrate that writing can be taught and that students can indeed be "made" into writers by their serious application to thoughtful, appropriate learning activities set for them by well-intentioned teachers operating from well-informed theory. We intend to show here that learning to write can be a rewarding, if challenging, scholastic adventure for students and that teaching writing can offer teachers exhilaration without exhaustion. And we hope to convey that writing can still function productively in people's lives, even in this electronic age of nonprint media.

What We Believe about the Teaching of Writing

1. Writing is a complex, unitary process that involves much more than the exercise of its component skills.
2. Writing requires an orderly integration of the random flow of thoughts and feelings.
3. Students should write at a level appropriate to age and experience.
4. Frequent, guided writing experience is critical in a quality program of composition.
5. Preparation for the act of writing is a decisive factor in the quality of the results.
6. Students can benefit by working from oral to written forms.
7. Application of sound grammatical principles is essential to quality writing. These principles are best developed in the context of writing.
8. Every writing act benefits from the assumption of a rhetorical stance, in which the writer makes deliberate decisions regarding voice, audience, purpose, and form.
9. Writing consists of the initial commitment to paper of a first draft, followed by a series of informed revisions.
10. Writing "errors" are more likely to occur at the surface level in the conventions of standard written English than in the deep linguistic structures of basic thought.
11. Students are capable of intelligent responses to each other's writing; educational value accrues to both the student writer and the reader from these editing experiences.
12. Teacher response and evaluation is a basic part of a good composition program.

1 BEFORE STUDENTS WRITE

Prewriting is the first stage in the writing process. It includes any "experience, activity, or exercise that motivates a person to write, that generates material and ideas for writing, or that focuses a writer's attention on a particular subject. Prewriting stimulates and enlarges thought and moves writers from the stage of thinking *about* a writing task to the act of writing" (***Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program,*** California State Department of Education). This stage in the writing process is frequently overlooked, but what writers do at the prewriting stage is likely to be more important in generating quality than teacher "marking" at the end. In fact, the goal of prewriting is to develop the content and to explore the possibilities in the writing task so fully in the writer's mind (and on the pages in front of him or her) that the paper will virtually write itself. In the process of doing this planning, the writer can discover more material than he or she needs, one idea can lead on to another, details can be captured, and new approaches can emerge. The strategies that follow are designed to prepare the writer to get those words on paper.

Logs

Writing logs are a multipurpose prewriting strategy that can be used in any class where teaching, thinking, and learning take place (see chapter 5). Logs allow teachers to keep a check on the dynamics of the learning process rather than examining just its end product.

Logs focus students' attention on the writing activity to follow; they allow students the opportunity to explore concepts in a diverse way prior to writing; and they provide students with a systematic process for recording and retaining their learning ideas in all classes (based on the work of Bob Tierney, Bay Area Writing Project).

Prelearning logs. Two suggestions for the use of prelearning logs as a focus for the lesson and an exploration of what the student already knows follow:

Plan 1: Before introducing a new concept, skill, or unit, ask the students to take perhaps three to five minutes to explain in writing what they already know about the topic. Examples:

Science—photosynthesis
Music—syncopation
Math—congruence
English—*Hamlet*
Social studies—westward movement
Humanities—Victorian period

Students then gather in small groups and read exactly what they have written. There is to be no evaluation or judgment at this time. The group then develops questions they need answered in order to understand more fully the concept, skill, or unit.

After completing the lesson or unit, have students explain what they learned about the concept, skill, or unit and compare that knowledge with the prelearning log entry. The teacher may keep their prelearning writing, return the papers to the students at the end of the study, and have them write what they now know about the subject for their final exam. In the comparison, students will see and be aware of how much they have learned.

Plan 2: Ask students to write down one sentence indicating what they know about a subject. These sentences may be posted on the wall during the unit study. Discussion then centers on revising the statements to make them true. Next, students write one question indicating something they would like to know about the subject. Post those questions on the wall, also. At the end of the unit, check to see if the questions are answered and if understandings and concepts are clear.

Reading logs. Make a reading assignment, generally short. Tell students to keep a record of their reading and jot down any thoughts or questions they might have as they read. They may write anything as long as it is true and appropriate for classroom discussion. This record may be done in class or as homework. On the following day, the log may be read by another student and comparisons or explanations shared.

Brainstorming/Brainwriting

Brainstorming is a very common prewriting technique. The purpose is to gather a variety of ideas, opinions, and viewpoints about any given topic and place them before the group, either on the board or on a chart. In brainstorming, anyone may contribute any idea related to the topic. No value judgments, criticisms, or alterations of ideas are made during brainstorming sessions. It is from this collection of contributions that subsequent discarding and organizing may be done in order to formulate a paper, either by the class or by individual students. The technique is also useful for individuals working alone from the start to gather ideas for a composition.

An alternative to brainstorming is *brainwriting*. The basic method involves dividing the class into groups of four or five students. Each student begins generating ideas based upon the topic and writes them down on a sheet of paper. After three or four ideas are written, papers are then traded with another member of the group. The student reads the other list of ideas and adds more ideas underneath. This process continues until time is called. At that point, each group can combine and organize the ideas for a group paper, or the best ideas can be shared with the rest of the class.

Clustering/Word Bank/Mapping

A special application of brainstorming is *clustering*, which retains the rich development of data or ideas brainstorming offers while adding an organizational element to the collection. It tends to trigger ideas and focus them on paper while patterns emerge naturally within the cluster. Clustering is self-directed, once introduced, and can be used with *any* level of student in *any* time allotment or class structure. Its visual character seems to stimulate the flow of association characteristic of right-brain activity and is particularly good for students who know what they want to say "but just can't say it." A large quantity of *specific* detail can be amassed very quickly and used as the basis for an organized paper.

In clustering, the writer records a topic or concept in the middle of the page, and then begins to gather ideas into clusters around the central concept (see figure 2). Please note that the spatial "bubbling" of the ideas seems to be important.

Word bank, a very familiar prewriting activity, depends upon listing words that come to mind about a specific topic and then categorizing them. Or the categories can be shown first and then words listed in each category. Students may work individually or all together, with the words being written on the board.

Mapping is similar to brainstorming, except that it presents a graphic representation of key words to be used in a composition; it adds a visual dimension that helps students gain greater control of and fluency in thinking and writing.

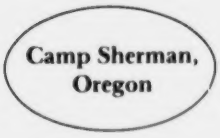
Students first list words, then organize the words into categories as in a word bank. Next, students arrange these categories and words on a map like the one shown in figure 3, the controlling topic or idea in a dominant position and the supporting ideas as extensions. A pinwheel shape is only one of the many configurations which may develop. Others may be triangles, concentric circles, ladders, road maps. New ideas often emerge during mapping, and additions and deletions are encouraged.

Based on the map, a topic sentence and paragraphs can be drafted by a group, or individual students may develop their own drafts. Mapping in a sense provides its own outline—each category inviting development with explanation, definition, example, and comparison to be added.

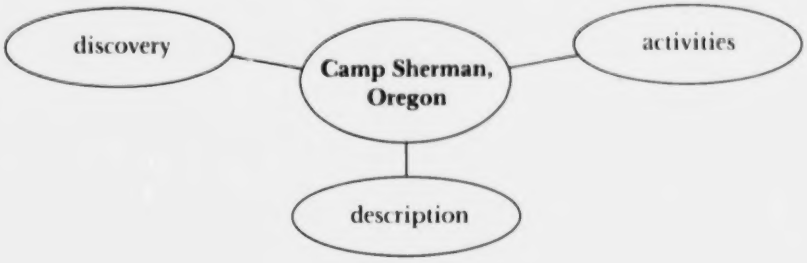
Direct Experience

The interview, opinion survey, field trip, and experiment or demonstration are valuable prewriting strategies involving direct experience. Each involves the students in an activity which provides stimulus and information for writing. There are innumerable possibilities for teachers to direct or invent—from the blindfold walk, to classroom interviews on the first day of school, to a planned field trip to

Step 1: Select your favorite place.



Step 2: Establish the major directions for development.



Step 3: Add details.

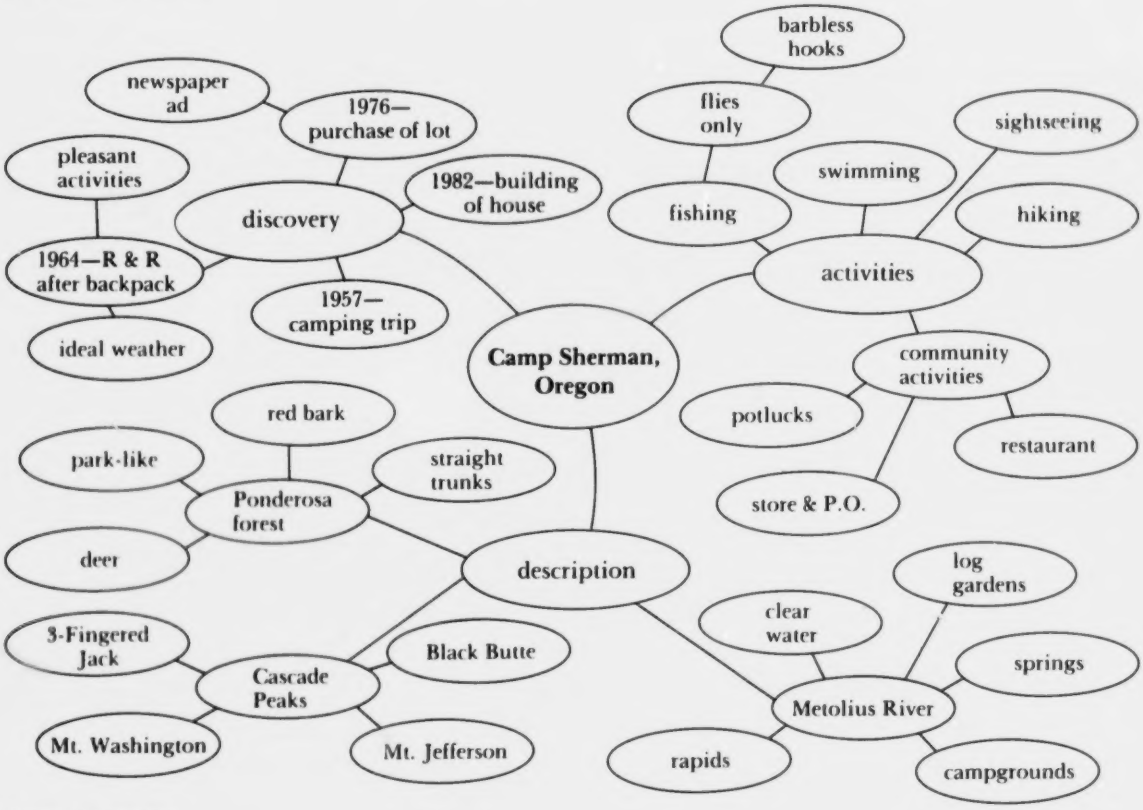


Figure 2. Clustering

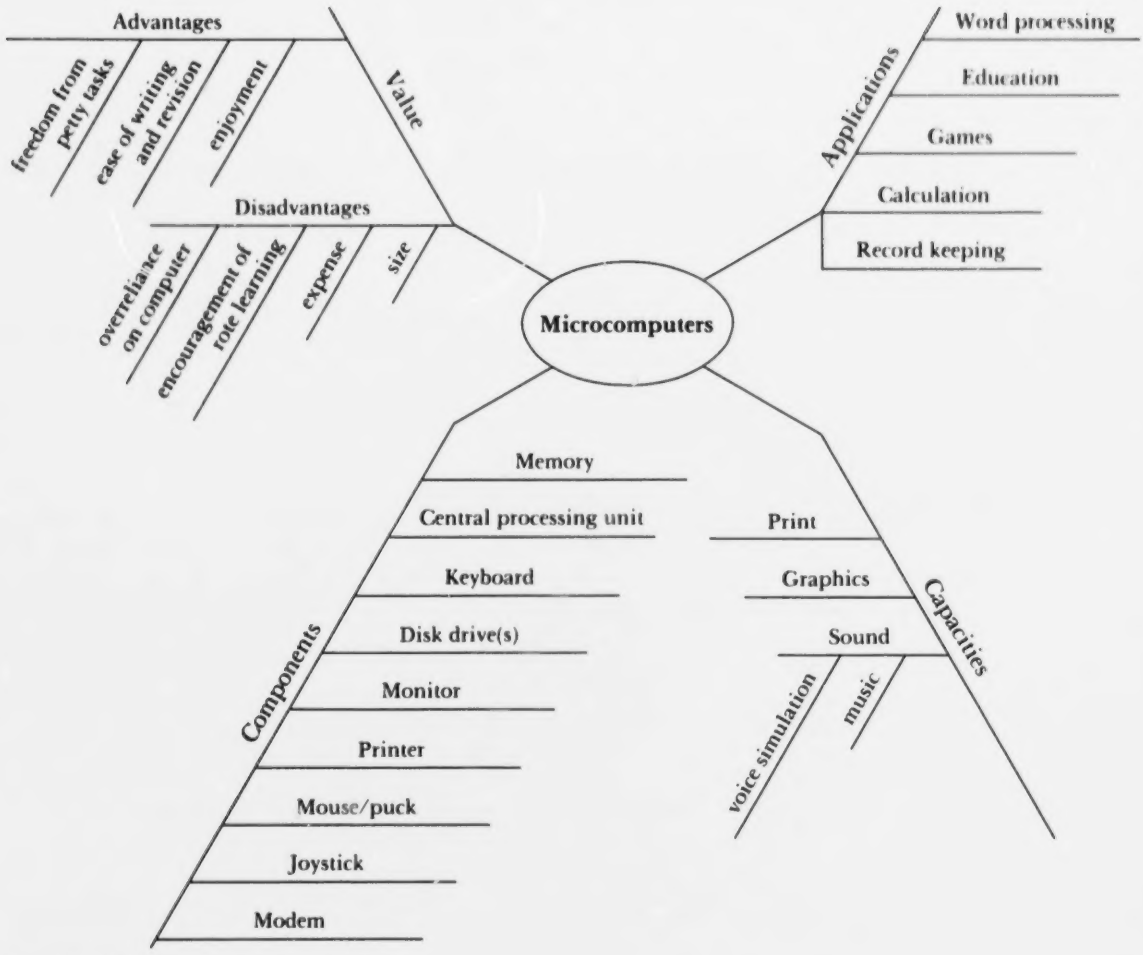


Figure 3. Mapping

the zoo or a play, to demonstrating how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, to surveying how students, faculty, and parents feel about a closed campus, to cleaning up the trash in the lunchroom. Each activity can lead to a follow-up writing assignment.

Oral Activities

Drama, pantomime, debate, improvisation, and discussion are all possibilities for motivation and prewriting. Again, teachers can direct or invent opportunities for verbal activities for students to participate in or observe, thus providing stimulus for subsequent writing. Students may write about their own feelings as they participated, or their observations as others talked, or assume the role of someone or something else—a fly on the window, the clock on the wall. Situations involving the teacher might be invented with the classroom as observers. Perhaps a teacher-colleague might enter the room, remove the projector, and cause an argument. Or a usually reasonable student might throw something, and the teacher respond out of character. The students might then write their thoughts and feelings, make a written report to the principal, or write a note to an absent friend telling what happened.

Journal/Timed Writing

A *journal* is a record of ideas, thoughts, questions, and impressions that come into a person's mind and are put down in writing in a special book.

There is a distinction between a journal and a diary. A diary is a personal record of activities, feelings, and emotions; a journal is a *workbook* in which students develop ideas, speculate on events, and plan projects. Personal matters can be dealt with, but a journal is more than a diary.

Journals encourage students to write often, to begin developing fluency in recording ideas and feelings, and to discover the value of writing for themselves, and may provide the initial focus for subsequent writing assignments.

Students should record the date each time they write, and they should be encouraged to illustrate their journals. Some teachers assign journal writing for about ten minutes or so once or twice a week, usually at the beginning of the period. Journal writing can be about anything students wish, or teachers may give a choice of two or three journal "starters." Generally, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and organization are not marked. Teachers merely record that the students wrote in their journals. (See chapter 6 for journal starters.)

The purpose of *timed writing* is, as in journal writing, to get students to write and to reward the effort. Generally, sessions of from three to five minutes at the beginning of the year provide enough time for starters, gradually increasing as the year goes on. As in journal writing, timed writing may be on an assigned, but open-ended, subject and may be written at the beginning of the period once or twice a week. Students record the lines or number of words they were able to write in the time allotted. They will find that, as fluency develops, they increase words and lines. The teacher does not grade timed writing, but records only numbers of words and lines, or that students participated in timed writing. Often, as with the journal, timed writing may be expanded into a more formal, graded writing assignment.

Venn Diagram

The Venn diagram, illustrated in figure 4, is a superior way to assist students in visualizing comparisons and contrasts. The information gathered and written on the diagram provides the basis for the clear organization of thought and the translation of information to a paper.

Outlining

Traditionally, students were expected to prepare outlines prior to writing papers. However, with increased knowledge of the different ways students learn and the awareness of left- and right-brain functions, it is now acknowledged that clustering, word banks, mapping, and other prewriting activities are also acceptable ways for students to organize thought.

A formal outline organizes material according to main and supporting ideas, and arranges ideas in the order they will have in the report. In many instances, that sort of order is not possible until after other prewriting activities have been put into use, or until student thinking is stimulated about

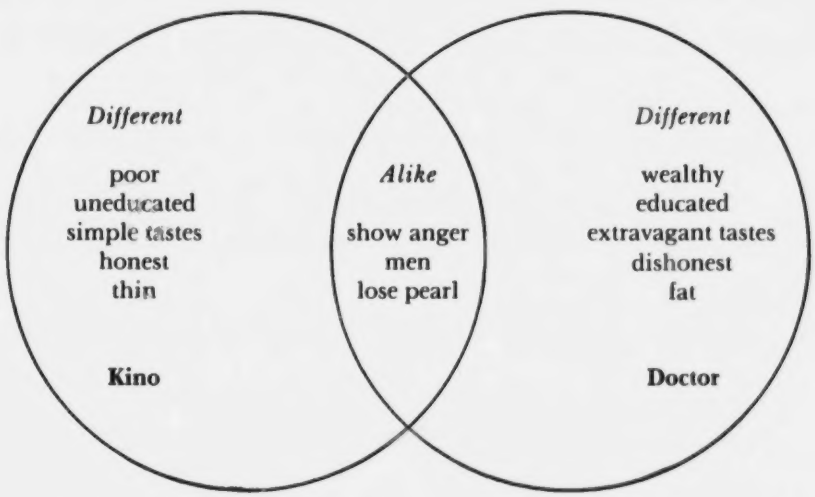


Figure 4. Venn diagram based on *The Pearl*, by John Steinbeck

the topic. Once ideas have been generated, however, outlining can be a useful way of organizing them effectively. More detailed information about structure for outlining can be found in standard grammar or composition textbooks.

Framing

Framing is a kind of structured prewriting that provides students with a skeleton or "frame" on which to build a paragraph or short paper. It forces students to develop detail and stretch ideas while reinforcing patterns through imitation. In addition, it provides the unsure student with security by setting topic and pattern, and it guarantees relative success for any student because it provides a structure for expression of ideas. In most cases, it is best used as remediation or when a particular concept needs to be taught or reinforced. It can be used, however, with *any* level of student in *any* time or class structure, and can be done independently, once introduced.

Following is an example of framing to show contrast.

> What different feelings the two boys had as they waited in the principal's office! The one _____. The other _____. Also, _____. In contrast, _____. On one hand, _____. On the other hand, _____. Unlike _____. Another _____. After all, _____.

(See chapter 6 for other examples of framing.)

Data-Retrieval Chart

A data-retrieval chart is used to collect and record data in a simple and convenient form so that it can be used later for analysis and interpretation. A sample data-retrieval chart follows:

Explorer	Country	Motive	Area explored	Results
Columbus				
Cabot				
Magellan				

Because the chart allows students to gather the same kinds of information across two or more samples, it makes comparisons and contrasts easy. When the data-retrieval chart is filled in, it is then possible to ask a series of questions about the data which will help to establish relationships, inferences, and meaning.

Questions which can be asked after the information is listed on the chart are:

Information:	What did you find out?
Interpretation:	What do you think this might mean?
Comparison:	What similarities and differences do you see?
Classification:	What items seem to be related to one another? How?
Inference:	What can you infer about this?
Generalization:	What might be the reason for this? Why do you think this happened? What can you conclude from this? What summary statements might you make?

The writing that follows the preparation and interpretation of data-retrieval charts can provide students with a sense of purpose to their writing. Using a chart allows them to see how to gather and organize information.

Microlab

In this technique, the classroom is divided into an inner circle and an outer circle. The inner circle discusses a particular topic; the outer circle writes down observations or questions about the discussion. Groups can exchange places later on. These observations can then serve as the basis for a writing assignment.

Reading

Any reading can serve as a prewriting activity, and students can organize questions, data, and responses to the reading in a variety of ways.

2 WHILE STUDENTS WRITE

There comes the time, after a rich set of experiences with ideas, after thinking, talking, dramatizing, and brainstorming, when student writers take their pens or keyboards and commit themselves to composing a first draft. When writers have prepared well, and when they are sufficiently experienced with the many dimensions of written English, their drafts should almost write themselves. Helping students to reach that point is the role of instruction in the writing stage, through activities such as those suggested in this section. Such activities can be undertaken in separate instructional sequences or they can be done as integral parts of specific writing projects.

Writing is a unitary process that is much more than the exercise of a series of previously learned, previously practiced subskills. Writing involves remembering, planning, choosing, ordering, spelling, and the physical act of writing, all at once. It requires the conversion of idea to language to graphic symbol, all simultaneously. Such a complex activity requires much more than a few minutes of instruction followed by a practice worksheet; writing ability develops slowly through much guided experience with the forms, resources, and restrictions of the language. Providing students with that experience and helping them through it becomes the essence of the English or language arts classroom. And it takes much patient effort, much diverse activity.

The writing stage needs to be viewed in two very different ways. Seen in one way, it is the flowing of words onto the page, easily, naturally, rapidly. But it is also a time of making decisions, of choosing what to tell and what to leave out, of thinking about who is speaking and who is listening, of determining what order, what structure, what word works best. In some ways these functions even seem contradictory; the first needs to be fluid and fast while the other calls for deliberation and reason. The teaching task is to help the writer coordinate these two functions.

Fluency in Writing

At almost any stage of development, student writers benefit from fluency exercises, in which they experience the rapid flowing of idea onto paper, and discover that thought can easily be converted into written language. They need not be worried about error; they need not be constrained by form or convention.

Stream-of-thought writing. Students are asked to capture as completely as possible in writing the thoughts that go through their minds during a specific short time period. They use words, phrases, dashes to record the stream of ideas (or write the word "nothing" to record the blank times). The result is a record of thought—chaotic or orderly, simple or significant, diverse and interesting. Students write these records primarily for themselves. The record is both an exercise in fluency and a source for ideas which may be developed further at another time.

Timed freewriting. The teacher may ask students to spend a few minutes at the beginning of class writing as much as possible about any topic the individual students select. Response to these writings from the teacher or from fellow students would be appropriate, particularly in the form of queries or comments about content. The goal in timed writing is the maximum possible quantity; grammatical or mechanical accuracy are inappropriate issues.

Timed focused writing. Here the short time period for fluency writing is focused on a teacher-selected idea, epigram, issue, or picture. The teacher provides such stimuli as the following:

Questions: What do you like (dislike) about team sports?
Where would you go if you could go anywhere in the world?

Assertions: Homework is necessary to a good education.
Spring is the best time of the year.

Incongruities: Be a football during the Big Game.
Which is bigger, birthdays or toothaches?

Topics: Skiing
Jazz

The idea is to write quickly for the short time period, getting down as many words as possible, expressing as many thoughts as the time allows.

Chain of association. Starting with a given term, students see where their first-thought associations take them.

HOT------→ SUMMER------→
SWIMMING------→ SUNTAN------→ . . . .

Journal. Students are asked to keep track of what is going on in some aspect of their lives, both the events and their responses to them. The questions they are asked to track include:

What's happening?

What do you understand about what's happening?

What questions do you have?

How do you feel about what's happening?

What difference does this even make?

The journal has applicability to academic as well as personal parts of the students' lives. Examination of academic applications will follow in chapter 5.

The goal of fluency practice is the largest possible flow of sensible written language that can be produced easily by the writer. Keys to fluency writing are

1. starters that the student writers find easy to deal with;
2. de-emphasis on matters of convention and correctness;
3. some idea-oriented response to the fluency writing; and
4. much supportive reassurance that what they're writing is acceptable.

The teacher's role here is to set the task, to monitor the accomplishment of the writing, and to provide some content-level response, either personally or by involving someone else important in the students' lives.

Decision Making in Writing

Writers must make many choices as they commit words to paper. They need to appreciate the ranges of choice available to them in content, in rhetorical stance, in organizational pattern, and in linguistic structure. They need to understand how their choices will enhance or degrade the quality of the written piece and how their choices will affect the responses of their readers. The primary means of learning how to make the best decisions seems to be complex, continuing writing experiences closely examined by sensitive respondents.

Making Choices of Rhetorical Stance

Writers usually make assumptions about rhetorical stance when they write, whether they realize it or not. The typical school writer assumes the *voice* of the uncertain student, addresses the *audience* of teacher as critic and grade-giver, has the *purpose* of getting an A or B, and uses whatever *form* the teacher has proposed. Rhetorical stance becomes a valid arena for choice when the writer carefully and judiciously considers a *range* of possibilities in voice, audience, purpose, and form, and then makes decisions appropriate to the specific writing task at hand.

Voice. One might guess that the writer is a writer—and that's that. But each of us is called upon to fill many real roles, and we can project ourselves imaginatively into many others. That whole range of roles awaits the student writer in choosing a voice. Is he or she writing as a tenth grader in Ms. E's class (class clown? class dolt? class whiz?)? As brother or sister to an adoring younger sibling? As dutiful child? As new boyfriend or girlfriend? As star tennis player? As true friend? As sworn enemy? As the writer clearly establishes his or her own specific voice for any particular paper, he or she then can make the appropriate choices of content and language, of emphasis and tone.

Instructional methods to sensitize students to voice, to help them develop a sense of voice in their writing, follow:

1. Select a school issue on which there is divided opinion (progress reports, smoking areas, detention). Have students try two paragraphs on the same subject, one as the angry critic and one as the satisfied supporter. Then have students analyze the differences in word choice, metaphoric language, sentence length, etc.
2. Having selected some subject of adolescent concern (staying out too late, getting bad grades, getting a traffic ticket, cutting class), have students prepare internal dialogues between their fearful, self-critical voices and their reassuring, self-confident voices.
3. Having completed the reading of a literary piece, have the students write conversations between themselves and characters in the story about the events in the plot. They may assume a critical voice (e.g., with Walter Mitty) or a sympathetic voice (e.g., with Juliet).

Audience. Sensitivity to audience can make important differences in the way a written piece turns out. In considering their audiences, writers need to consider:

Who is the reader?

How sophisticated on this subject is the reader?

How ready is the reader to receive this "message"?

What help does the reader need?

What preformed opinions will this reader have?

The audience for any writing activity can be designated as part of the assignment or it can exist naturally in the writing situation; it can be simulated or real. Particular attention needs to be paid to *how* writers tune their messages to their audiences. Writers might articulate the audience clues in their pieces for their classmates as a way to illuminate audience as a variable.

Activities to develop a sense of audience include the following:

1. Select a well-known local event (sports event, accident, school activity, celebration). Have students write two versions, one for a person who knows the general scene but missed this particular event (e.g., an absent classmate) and one for a person not at all familiar with either the setting or the event (e.g., a faraway relative). Contrast the two versions in class discussion.
2. Ask the students to assume they've received what they feel is a totally unfair second-semester grade in English. First, they are to write to Mr. Z, who is known to be intolerant of student opinions, very sure of himself, and very hard to talk to. The writer did not get along well in class with Mr. Z. Then have them assume Ms. Y was the teacher. Ms. Y has the reputation of being very fair and reasonable. She had been fun in class, and the writer had gotten on well with her. Students should compare the two versions, noting the audience clues.
3. Writers are to take a subject they know well (osmosis, internal combustion engines, classical music, making brownies) and explain some part of it very clearly in writing to an eight-year-old. Students should be cautioned about the use of overly technical terms.

Purpose. There are many possible purposes to writing—to inform, to soothe, to persuade, to upset, to confirm, to explain, to record, and to entertain, among others. The purpose selected becomes another controlling factor in the way a written piece will be developed. An informational piece would more likely select important facts and present them in a straightforward way, while a persuasive one might, deliberately or not, omit or distort some facts while embellishing others. Writers must experiment with purpose and the way it affects writing so they may make responsible choices of purpose and make those choices work in the writing stage.

Instructional activities which will give the writer experience with the variable of purpose include the following:

1. Select a local problem which is well known to the students (school, community, environmental, political). After discussing the issue thoroughly in class, ask students to write to two different purposes: one to *persuade* a

responsible public official to take a particular course of action and the other to *entertain* a same-age friend who is away in a foreign land as an exchange student. Follow up with a small-group comparison-contrast analysis as a way to get at how different purposes changed the pieces.

2. Distribute copies of single-product advertisements. Ask the students to rewrite the information given there into an information piece for a consumer column in the local newspaper. Examine sample papers in a class discussion to see how a change in purpose changed the presentation.

Form. Decisions about voice, audience, and purpose, coupled with a clear sense of content, usually lead very plainly to a particular form. A concerned citizen wishing to persuade her Congressperson about a course of action on acid rain quite properly selects a business letter form. A young swain wishing to restate his strong feelings for his high school sweetheart would be more likely to choose a poetry form than a display ad. At any rate, a choice of form is necessary at the beginning of the writing stage.

Forms abound in our complicated culture; instruction in writing should include some passing experience with many of them and in-depth experience with some, experience enough to make them familiar to students and to make students comfortable with them. Sample activities for such purposes include the following:

1. Distribute copies of pieces done in a variety of public forms (possibilities include editorials, news articles, legal documents, myths, essays, how-to-do-it articles, magazine fiction, advice columns, children's stories, tall tales, and want ads). Ask each student to do a brief oral report on the piece he or she has received, commenting particularly on the form, how it works, and how it is appropriate to audience and purpose.
2. Distribute copies of letters to the editor. Have students try converting them into some other form used in a newspaper. After reading some aloud, discuss how well the alternate form works.

A list of some of our culture's writing forms follows.

Some Discourse Forms for Content Writing

- Journals and diaries
  - (real or imaginary)
- Biographical sketches
- Anecdotes and stories:
  - from experience
  - as told by others
- Thumbnail sketches:
  - of famous people
  - of places
  - of content ideas
  - of historical events
- Guess who/what descriptions
- Letters:
  - personal reactions
  - observations
  - public/informational
  - persuasive:
    - to the editor
    - to public officials
  - to imaginary people
  - from imaginary places
- Requests
- Applications
- Memos
- Résumés and summaries
- Poems
- Plays
- Stories, such as:
  - fantasy
  - adventure
  - science fiction
  - historical
- Dialogues and conversations
- Children's books
- Telegrams
- Editorials
- Commentaries
- Responses and rebuttals
- Newspaper "fillers"
- Fact books or fact sheets
- School newspaper stories
- Stories or essays for local papers
- Case studies:
  - school problems
  - local issues
  - national concerns
  - historical problems
  - scientific issues

Songs and ballads
Demonstrations
Poster displays
Reviews:
  books (including textbooks)
  fiction or nonfiction films
  fiction or nonfiction television programs
  music
Historical "you are there" scenes
Science notes:
  observations
  science notebook
  reading reports
  lab reports
Math:
  story problems
  solutions to problems
  record books
  notes and observations
Responses to literature
Proposals:
  Utopian
  practical
Interviews:
  actual
  imaginary
Directions:
  how-to
  school or neighborhood guide
  survival manual
Dictionaries and lexicons
Technical reports
Future options, notes on:
  careers, employment
  school and training
  military/public service
Written debates
Essays taking a stand on:
  school issues
  family problems
  state or national issues
  moral questions
Books and booklets
Informational monographs
Scripts:
  radio
  TV
  dramatic
  film or slide-show
Notes for improvised drama
Cartoons and cartoon strips
Puzzles and word searches
Prophecy and predictions
Photographs and captions
Collages, montages, mobiles, and sculptures
  incorporating written language

Making Choices of Content

Strategic questioning. Once the student writers have built a full body of content by clustering, discussing, mapping, and so on, in the prewriting stage, they then must choose from this content as they set out to write. Here the application of a comprehensive classification of questions can help the writer highlight what is important and judge whether the prewriting activities have harvested a complete set of possibilities for the written piece.

For easy student use, we suggest a simple four-part classification of questions based on Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive levels and Joy Guilford's *The Nature of Human Intelligence.* The question types are exemplified here with questions drawn from chapter 14, "The Happy Camp of the Freebooters," in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.*

1. *Restatement:* a question asking for a recall of the facts about the event, situation, place, or person being written about. For example: What superstitions existed in Mark Twain's time?
2. *Convergent question:* a question requiring the use of the facts to prove a point or support a generalization. For example: Was Tom Sawyer superstitious?
3. *Divergent question:* a question that causes the writer to use a known fact as a starting point from which to move away in a logical but unusual way. For example: What superstitions do I believe?
4. *Evaluative question:* a question that uses the information developed to reach some kind of judgment. For example: Are superstitions foolish?

For instance, a student might have chosen to write about a summer hiking experience in the Sierras in response to the classic (and often-

maligned) topic, "My Summer Vacation." She would have mapped the experience, developing details about the preparations, about each of the five days of the trip, and about coming home, suggesting a strongly chronological pattern of organization. If, however, she applied the strategic questions, as exemplified below, she might come up with some new insights for her paper:

1. *Restatement:* What special skills did this trip require?
2. *Convergent:* What did you discover about yourself on this trip that you hadn't known before?
3. *Divergent:* How is a place you visited on this trip like someplace else you've known?
4. *Evaluative:* What did you like best about this trip? What did you like least?

When our writer has worked through these questions, she will have discovered the possibilities in highlighting the special skills used, in writing about self-discovery, in comparing places, and in judging the quality of the experience, any one or two of which could add significant strength to a straight chronology.

Students will need much experience in developing and applying these kinds of questions. Class discussion could result in the students' building a common set of questions from a common assignment. Practice in phrasing these questions can also flow from almost any piece of literature studied. For example, after reading the playscript of *The Diary of Anne Frank* (New York: Random, 1956), students could work with the following:

1. *Restatement:* Convert act I, scene 4, back into the diary form from which the script came. (No fair peeking!)
2. *Convergent:* Use an interview format to develop a dialogue in which Mr. Frank is asked about the years in the Secret Annex.
3. *Divergent:* Write the diary entry for one more encounter between Anne and Mr. Dussel, keeping their characters and relationship as they were depicted in the play.
4. *Evaluative:* Assuming you had been a silent witness to the events of the play, write your own interior monologue in which you describe and judge Anne's treatment of her mother.

(Note that these have undergone an additional transformation from question to writing activity.)

Showing, not telling. The "Showing, Not Telling" concept, developed for writing project presentations by Rebekah Kaplan of the Bay Area Writing Project, asks students to select content so that the generalization flows naturally from carefully selected details. Student writers are infamous for their unsupported generalizations ("She has everything," or "That movie was stupid"); they don't naturally cite details and let their readers come to their own conclusions. So some experience in choosing the appropriate details can help writers to less didactic, more interesting written pieces.

The following activities are ways for students to become sensitive to choosing the appropriate details to support their generalizations (which then may not even be stated):

1. For a daily writing, ask students to turn a generalization into a detailed paragraph that makes the same point by its selection of fact. Sample generalizations:
   The scene was peaceful.
   The Demon is the scariest ride at Marriott's.
   She acted weird.
2. Teach specific ways of showing.
   Do a characterization by setting alone.
   Do a characterization by clothing alone.
   Do a characterization by actions alone.
3. Ask students to detail comparisons and contrasts.
   Saturday was different from Sunday.
   Ninth grade is different from seventh grade.

Considering Organizational Patterns

Another decision student writers face as they move into the writing stage is how to order their material. Assuming the prewriting activities have suggested some sorting or grouping of detail, the writers then need to decide what to put first and what to leave to last. Various kinds of logic exist for ordering a written piece, and writers must match their materials to the appropriate logic. These logical orders include the following:

1. *Chronological:* arranged in time order, usually beginning to end. The flashback, however, allows the writer to begin near or at the end.

2. *Spatial:* arranged according to location in space. The order goes from near to far, right to left, top to bottom, inside out (or the opposite, or some variation).
3. *Order of importance:* arranged according to a judgment of significance, either from most to least important or vice versa.
4. *Logic of comparison:* arranged into groups of similarities and of differences.

And there are many other possibilities for order out there—the deliberate withholding of information in a suspense piece or a deliberate disordering, for example. A choice is a necessary early step.

Making Choices of Linguistic Structure

Whole dictionaries, thesauri, and series of textbooks deal with the lexical and grammatical resources of English. Since these resources are all available to writers as they move to committing their ideas to the page, here we will explore the issue only briefly, by illustrating some possible decision making in English sentence structure.

Sentence variety is recommended in many writing texts. Variety for variety's sake may have some merit, but it would make better rhetorical sense were sentence types to flow from some idea of how the sentences were to function, what information load they were designed to carry.

Let's explore a possible set of sentence types to see how form fits function:

1. *Simple:* The dog trotted down the street. (Straightforward conveyance of the fact of the performance of an action or a state of affairs.)
2. *Expanded simple:* The large brown dog trotted crazily down the crowded street. (Adds sensory detail to the basic statement.)
3. *Compound:* The dog trotted down the street, and the children followed him. (Combines two closely related assertions; shows the order of their occurrence.)
4. *Complex:* When the dogcatcher tried to stop him, the dog trotted down the street. (Relates two assertions so that one supports or amplifies the other.)
5. *Cumulative:* The dog trotted down the street, his legs carrying him crazily from side to side, the children following eagerly after him. (Allows the cumulation of much detail to support and amplify a simple initial assertion.)

Names and grammatical definitions here are of much less importance than the ability to use these structures effectively. That ability needs to move to the intuitive level after students have had full experience with sentence types by manipulating sentence parts, by modeling well-crafted sentences, and by completing sentences from arbitrary starters. Descriptions of such activities follow:

Free sentence combining. Ask students to combine a group of kernel sentences into a single, well-formed sentence. For example:

Source sentences: Bottles lie on every stream bed. Cans lie on every stream bed. They glint among the pebbles. (From William Strong, *Sentence Combining: A Composing Book*, 2d ed. [New York: Random, 1983]).

Combinations:

Bottles and cans lie on every stream bed, where they glint among the pebbles.

Glinting among the pebbles, bottles and cans lie on every stream bed.

Bottles and cans, which glint among the pebbles, lie on every stream bed.

Bottles and cans, which lie on every stream bed, glint among the pebbles.

Bottles and cans lie on every stream bed, glinting among the pebbles.

Students then evaluate the resulting combinations, and eliminate any that are incomplete, faulty, or lacking in clarity. Students then judge those qualifying as satisfactory solutions on the basis of clarity, economy, and expressiveness, identifying the most appropriate solution.

Sentence modeling. Ask students to write sentences on an announced subject, modeling them structurally after well-crafted sentences from literature.

Example: Write a sentence about a vivid sunset, modeled after "It blended

so perfectly with the sand, driftwood, and seaweed that I might have passed it by."

William O. Douglas
The Pacific West

Possible solution: The alpenglow flared so brilliantly across the snowfields, the aspen grove, and the still surface of the lake that I might have thought it to be artificial.

Sentences from starters. Ask students to complete sentences from starters the teacher supplies. A subordinate conjunction will probably result in a complex sentence; a short simple sentence can lead to a cumulative one.

Example: When . . . . . , ...

Example: The baby cried, ...

All of the writing activities described in this section are designed to help the writer become more fluent and better able to exercise the judgments necessary to produce good writing. These activities serve as instruction in preparing the student writer to move from idea building and organizing in the prewriting stage to the production of a first draft in the writing stage. They can be viewed as the skill-building methodology for the writing stage.

The Writing Act Itself

The stereotypical view of the writer presents the poor soul hidden away in a lonely room, awaiting inspiration, then grinding out a draft with much frustration, much ripping of pages from the typewriter, much crossing out and starting again. This is not a useful vision of the student writer. Nor is it necessarily an accurate one.

If prewriting activities are successful, student writers will actually have plenty to write about, so the frustration of having nothing to say should be minimized. If they have developed some sense of confidence in their fluency in written English, they should find it fairly easy to put the first words on paper. If they have a sense of what rhetorical and linguistic choices they have and how any set of choices will influence a particular piece, they can move on confidently to what to say and how to say it. Student writers may finally be able to approach a plateau of confidence, aware that they are undertaking a first cut, a starter, a place from which to begin on their revisions.

So, given a rich set of learning experiences with writing, it comes time to produce a first draft. What circumstances can best accommodate the writing act? Many teachers may make the writing itself a homework assignment, assuming that the instruction has already been accomplished, once the assignment is made, and that all that is left is for the individual to work alone to produce the draft.

Although such a decision may well be defensible, it is still important to compare the classroom and the home on two variables: the conditions for writing and the psychological (and technical) support for the writer. The classroom can offer a period of relatively quiet, uninterrupted time (if you work hard enough at it), linguistic references of dictionary, thesaurus, and handbook, and maybe in the near future even a computer terminal or keyboard. And the classroom, in the persons of the teacher and fellow students, can offer a cadre of sympathetic, positive readers who value writing and who understand the writing process.

Some homes can match these conditions, maybe even better them by the addition of immediate, one-to-one response to the writer's questions or frustrations. But in reality, most don't. At home there are just as apt to be the blaring TV, the impossibility of privacy or private time to do homework, a paucity of writing references and materials, and no one who has the time, the energy, or the experience to support the writer through the development of a draft and the subsequent efforts to revise and edit it.

If the writing of drafts is to be done at home, the teacher takes on a responsibility for educating families about necessary conditions for home writing, about how the writing process works, and about how a sympathetic adult can really be helpful and supportive to the student writer. Many families do want to help. However, if you discover that the families of your students either don't want or are unable to help, you may want to have the writing done in class, where you can create the conditions: a quiet, businesslike workplace; the necessary resources and tools; and positive, supportive interaction with peers and at least one adult.

The object of this first-draft stage, of course, is the production of a readable rough draft

which responds to the assignment with some fullness and directness;

which gets written with a minimum of agony, frustration, and wasted time;

which reflects some degree of judgment in
  assuming a rhetorical stance
  and asking and answering strategic questions regarding content, organization, and linguistic choices;

and which can be used
  for response from a variety of readers,
  for the writer's rethinking of his or her paper,
  for revision and rewriting, and,
  only then, for a grade.

3 AFTER STUDENTS WRITE

Postwriting, or what happens to papers after students do their initial writing, includes several stages: *revision*, which involves changing order, style, tone, vocabulary, etc.; *proofreading*, or correcting errors of punctuation, spelling, and grammar; and *evaluating*, which means reading and assigning a mark or grade.

If students are to improve and succeed in writing, then it is necessary to differentiate the functions of revision and proofreading in the postwriting stage. In evaluating, if we consider it important that students follow the stages in the writing process, then we will consider grading or marking on the *process* they follow as well as on the product they produce.

Revision

After motivating and prewriting, after the first draft is written, the next step in the writing process is for students to revise and edit.

Revision has incorrectly been thought of in terms of recopying an assignment neatly in ink, or of correcting grammar, punctuation, and spelling, or of simply tidying up the writing to suit the whims of an English teacher. If, by revision, the teacher means catching errors and nothing more, the students will not be likely to develop a very respectful attitude toward the process.

Revision, in terms of its etymology and its best application in the writing process, means "seeing again." Revision and rewriting, when properly done, and when regarded as a normal part of the process of writing, can serve to strengthen a piece of writing, and should not be viewed as a punishment, or the price a student has to pay for a draft that is not acceptable the first time.

Revision can be a very frustrating part of writing, both to teach and to learn. When students don't revise, it may be laziness on their part, or it may be that they have not been taught how to revise, how to "see again." When they do revise their writing and do a good job of it, they become critical and questioning, and excited about how much better their writing is after revision.

Revision can be a motivating force for students if they are given the opportunity to experience the adventure of rewriting. Unfortunately, many teachers do not appreciate the importance or the excitement of revision. It is not enough to tell students to "revise and resubmit." Teachers must organize activities which will teach the process of revision effectively. Teachers need to lead students through the problems uncovered in their written work, helping them discover which revision activities will solve which problems and then assisting them in applying the skills necessary in these activities. Students need to understand that increasing their vocabulary, engaging in sentence-combining exercises, and studying point of view, style, and voice can provide them with the tools they need to overcome inaccurate language, awkward syntax, disorganization, and inappropriate tone.

For example, the teacher might call students' attention to the use of metaphor or simile in a piece of literature they are reading. The next writing assignment might then call for the use of one or more examples of figurative language, and one of the elements in the scoring of the paper would be whether it did indeed use metaphor or simile in an appropriate manner.

Please note that some writing assignments should be allowed to go by without revision. Impromptu essays, journal entries, timed writing, and a variety of writing activities are designed simply to stimulate the flow of words and help students get into the habit of writing. Subjecting every word of these writings to revision would defeat their whole purpose.

Student editing groups can be the most effective revision technique used in a classroom. Other

important revision techniques discussed here have been developed by Virginia Pohl, of the Area 3 Writing Project.

Peer editing/response groups. When students write and know their peers will read, listen to, and respond to their writing, they know they are writing for an audience whose opinions matter to them. They no longer feel they're writing papers that will only be corrected, graded, handed back, and probably thrown away without ever having made contact with attentive minds. During well-run editing sessions, writers see the effect of their work, sense the impact it could make with revision, and experience what it's like to be in a writer-audience relationship. The editors benefit as well, since as they read, edit, diagnose, and help solve the writing problems of others they develop similar skills for improving their own writings before a teacher or student editor gets the chance. They also discover how many different ways there are to write well. As they become better editors, students develop the critical sense that recognizes good writing; they applaud their peers' good writing; they give eager attention to a good paper, and take such a paper quickly to another student or the teacher, saying, "Here, read this. It's great."

Over the weeks and months (for the process takes time), as class rapport is being established, peer-editing groups improve the learning environment of a classroom, creating an atmosphere of sharing and trust that infuses other aspects of classroom life. Students develop a sense of group inclusion, acceptance, support, reality checking, and collaboration.

Reading their papers aloud to a group is another important stage in revision work, but one for which the teacher will have to structure the opportunities and atmosphere carefully. After a couple of weeks, few students worry about reading their papers out loud to the editing group. In fact, because trust has been developed, because they have pride in a piece of good writing and want to share it with a live audience, and because they know that their editing group will offer helpful suggestions to clarify and improve the paper, they are eager to move into editing groups. They anticipate the pleasure of reading aloud what they have written. When students who have not completed their writing (there are always a few of the "not ready yet" or "left at home" variety) are not permitted to join a group but must stay in the classroom and work on their first drafts, they sense the shock of being left out, and subsequently come prepared more often.

After some time, peer-editing groups can become so well organized, so systematized, and so positive and cooperative a learning experience that sometimes the teacher may even feel left out. It is not unusual, also, that the students become uncomfortable or embarrassed when the teacher comes over to listen in on or join their groups. The students have a sense of ownership of the groups with which they are independently working and learning. What better classroom atmosphere could there be? The teacher's role, as they see it, is to read the final draft and give it a grade, not to hear their fumbling first drafts. They rely on their groups to help them with those, to ask questions if meaning is unclear, to suggest better arrangements of ideas, to correct spelling and punctuation.

Following is a description of an editing group in action. The assignment was to write a poem responding to a chapter in the novel they were reading. A portion of the conversation of the editing group follows. (Please note that the conversation did not flow as smoothly as the transcription suggests. Pauses, repetitions, false starts, "ums," etc., have been deleted to show only the basic content of the editing process within the group.) Following the reading of her poem, the writer speaks:

Writer: What I think is the whole thing needs some work, particularly the title. I didn't know what to put and so I put that first thing, and I haven't had a chance to change it.

Editor #1: I thought it was very descriptive about the surroundings and how the young sheep were jumping around like they should be.

Writer: I don't know a whole lot about sheep.

Editor #2: It was kind of choppy.

Writer: That's true.

Editor #3: It's good how you say the wool of the sheep feels and what it smells like when it gets wet.

Editor #1: I really liked the part about the stream of love; that was really good. But I kind of wanted to know why you were sad and why the evil was there. I didn't have any idea.

Editor #2: Yeah, I didn't know why you were sad.

Writer: Oh, OK. You're next.

There are two initial rules that students should adhere to in editing/response groups:

1. Each student must read his or her own paper aloud to the group. No handing of papers to others to be read silently. As students read their own papers aloud, they are more able to discern problems in syntax, organization, omissions, incompleteness, etc.
2. The student who has read his or her paper must make the first comment on it. It is even possible for the writer to lead the discussion. It is the natural inclination of the group members to say, "That's good!" or "I liked it." However, self-evaluation is important and the writer/reader should make a specific comment first, such as "I really liked the ending," or "I had a hard time getting started." Following the self-evaluative comments, the editors should make positive suggestions for improvement. The group members can also look at the paper to help with mechanics.

The following are suggestions of ways to establish working and helpful editing groups.

—At the beginning of the year, the teacher should define trust in the classroom: that it's all right for students to read aloud what they've written; that there is value in each person's ideas; and that positive and specific comments and suggestions will be more helpful than unconstructive, vague, or inappropriate criticism. For example, instead of a comment such as "That was good!" a more specific comment would be, "I really liked your word choice in the conclusion." Instead of "It was too short," say, "It could have been improved if there'd been more information about the accident or a description of the scene."

At first, limit the response to what the editors liked best about the paper. Encourage students to be specific. What words and/or details were really effective? What are the best sentences in the paper? Why?

As group trust grows, editors can ask clarifying questions. Were there any parts that weren't clear? What needs to be added to make those parts clear? Were there questions you wish the writer had answered?

When students have gained a sense of clear and effective editing, they will be able to handle a more sophisticated discussion of papers. Are more specific details needed to show instead of tell? If so, where? Would adding sensory impressions improve the paper? Or would they only distract the reader from its argument? Is there a place for figurative language? Does the dialogue sound authentic? Are there places where the addition of dialogue would make the paper more interesting? Where? Should anything be changed to create the impression the writer was trying for? If so, what?

—After a short writing assignment is completed in class, ask for volunteers to share what they've written and illustrate the definitions of trust and constructive responses.

—A demonstration of an editing group that includes the teacher should be conducted before the entire class so questions can be answered and rules clarified.

—Later, ask students to find partners and have each read to the other what he or she has written. The teacher will need to remind students of the two initial rules (listed previously) of editing groups.

—Editing groups should be limited to from three to five students and may be formed by the students, who will inevitably choose those with whom they feel comfortable and willing to share criticism. Granted, some students will choose their friends, who may be unable to help them as much as they hope, but this is probably a necessary first step in the establishment of trust.

—Later on, the teacher may assign students to groups, using whatever criteria seem appropriate for the classroom.

—Students may or may not use the suggestions for revision given them by their editors. Occasionally, a student objects to the suggestions made by editors; if so, he or she has the option not to follow their advice for revision.

—At the beginning of the year, the teacher will need to move around and listen in to groups to be sure editing is progressing satisfactorily.

—An incentive that can be offered later on is to select a group to tape-record their editing session. The class can listen to the tape as an example of editing.

—Students may select from their group the paper which they feel best fulfills the assignment; these collected papers may then be read aloud to the class

by the teacher as examples of outstanding papers in each editing group.

—It is often useful for students to use a scoring rubric on a sheet in front of them. These sheets may then be passed on to the writers, who staple them to their writing. (See chapter 6 for examples.)

—For the first month or so peer editing may seem chaotic. Do not be discouraged if:

1. *some students don't want to share their papers with other students.* This may be an indication of the students' lack of confidence in their writing ability. Do whole-class response to papers initially in order for students to become accustomed to the process. Then, if some students are still reluctant, work with them alone or with only one other student until they feel more comfortable with this process.
2. *some students make superficial or unhelpful comments in the editing groups.* Whole-class response to papers will help to illustrate and underline the importance of specific, thoughtful comments. Class discussions of the characteristics of a helpful response will help to focus attention on what is expected in small groups.
3. *some students fool around in the group and ignore the work at hand.* Sit with a troublesome group and demonstrate response behavior for them. Point out the positive evidence of revision (or the damage caused by its lack) in their papers. Disbanding the group is also a possibility.

The students will learn the value and pleasure of editing groups, and by midyear, editing groups should be running smoothly, efficiently, and effectively.

Conferences. The student writer and the teacher can talk about a composition as it is in progress or after the first draft has been completed. Generally, conferences are most effective when the writing is brief, not more than a page or so, so the teacher has time to read it quickly. A conference means a scheduled time for the purpose of discussing the content of the paper, not mechanics. While another quiet activity is going on (a reading assignment, for example), students sign up for conferences. They bring their papers up to the conference table and may ask for any specific kind of help, for example, "Do I need a transition here?" or "Is this description clear?" Or the teacher may ask specific questions to pinpoint clarifications. For example, "Can you describe the smells at the camp and what you heard?"

Tape-recorded response. Just as for the conference, for this method the teacher will read the papers ahead of time, making suggestions for revision or asking questions for clarification, but will tape-record his or her comments. The comments may be general, about organization and overall impact, or they may refer to specific items, such as a shifting of tense in the second paragraph on page 2, etc. The students, with their papers in hand, listen to the tapes during class and make notes for revision. This has proved a useful technique that takes no teacher class time but provides concentrated, individualized help.

Private reading. Students read their own writing carefully, usually to look for some specific elements to assess in revision, self-evaluation, and analysis (see chapter 6 for a sample revision sheet).

Teacher reading. The teacher reads a number of compositions or special paragraphs, phrases, or sentences aloud to the whole class, without critical comment, for the purpose of letting students hear what other students have written. The writers' names may either be withheld or included. Generally, as this strategy is used, more and more students are eager to have their papers read aloud.

Student trading. Students give their papers to other students, who will read them, mark them in some specified manner, sign their names as readers, and pass them on to the next readers. The first readers could be asked to underline one or more outstanding phrases or sentences; the second readers to circle any particularly vivid verbs; and the third readers to put boxes around unusually descriptive adjectives.

Class trading. Students as a class silently read as many of one another's compositions as they can within a given time period. A scoring rubric or comment sheet should be used with each paper and stapled underneath when each student finishes reading a paper. In addition, each student keeps a record of the papers read during the class exchange (see chapter 6 for a sample). Students find this strategy very satisfying. The classroom is quiet and businesslike, and students want to read more papers even when the time is up.

Outside reaction. Students take their writing to someone other than their teacher or other students to have it read and briefly commented on. These

outside readers can be parents, neighbors, relatives, or any other trusted adults. This is a good strategy especially if students have written autobiographies, short stories, collections of poems, children's books, or self-created magazines. It is important for the teacher to communicate to the outside reader the purpose of the assignment and the criteria to look for.

Yes-no questionnaire. In a writing activity, the criteria for both content and form can be converted into a series of yes-no questions that even unsophisticated students can successfully answer about a fellow student's paper. The questions need to be worded so that a "yes" answer reflects a satisfactory accommodation to the criterion. A negative answer marks a point where revision is necessary. The challenge to the writer in this strategy is to revise the paper to turn all the *nos* into *yeses*.

For example, if the criterion is to develop a piece that conveys a feeling of fear, the questions would be, "Does the piece use appropriate details to build the effect of fear?" and, "Does the writer achieve the effect of fear without directly stating it?" If the criterion is to avoid sentence faults, the questions would break down thus: "Is the paper free from sentence fragments?" and "Is the paper free from run-ons?" (See chapter 6 for a sample questionnaire.)

Proofreading

Proofreading is the job of cleaning up the paper, eliminating surface errors. The need for students to proofread should not be ignored, but the teacher must stress that proofreading is only the final step in the process of revision. Some writing teachers have taught just proofreading, looking for errors, as revision, thus leaving students with the impression that learning to be a good writer is learning to avoid or correct errors. The student then gets the impression that a paper free from technical errors is a perfect paper, deserving an A.

A comfortable and rewarding way for the teacher to use these first two stages (revision and proofreading) in the postwriting process is the following:

1. Following motivating and prewriting, have students write their first drafts in class, working for fluency and freshness of ideas. First drafts may be finished at home if necessary.
2. Have students turn in their first drafts the next day.
3. In order for revision to be most effective, return the first drafts to the students after a day or so. The elapsed time allows students to "see again" their writing in a new light.
4. Next have students move into editing or response groups and read their first drafts aloud to members of the group, who make oral or written suggestions for improvement of the paper, or ask questions about order, logic, style, etc.
5. Request that revisions be executed and final drafts prepared at home, where it is possible for individualized help to be given.
6. Allow five to ten minutes in class before final drafts are turned in for students to accomplish final proofreading.
7. Ask students to turn in their final drafts with the first draft(s) stapled underneath. Then assess/grade the final draft, review and critique the process the students used in revision, and comment positively on the improvements made from first to final draft.

Evaluation

If the teacher has done a good job of teaching students the process of writing—using prewriting as a motivating and organizing force, letting first drafts be the step where ideas flow and fluency is developed, and emphasizing the importance of revision—then grading/correcting/evaluating papers will not be a heavy load. Papers will be turned in showing thought, style, organization, sense of audience and purpose, and relative freedom from mechanical errors. Then, reading and evaluating student papers will be a stimulating activity; the teacher will rejoice in the students' competence and their improvement. Many opportunities will be found for positive comments on the papers and assigning a grade will be a pleasure and not a grind.

There are differences among evaluating, grading, and correcting. *Grading* is the act of assigning a letter or number to represent the performance of the writer. A grade generally tells the student nothing about the specific strengths or weaknesses of the written work. *Correcting* involves pointing out the student's mistakes; if done by the teacher with no further response from the student, it is probably a useless activity. It is not the teacher who needs to learn how to correct mistakes, it is the student who

needs to learn how to improve his or her own writing. *Evaluation* may include grading and correcting, but it also implies an ongoing process designed to help students be aware of their strengths and weaknesses.

Before evaluating students' written compositions, the teacher should have in mind, and should make known to the students, some specific criteria that must be met. For one assignment, content may be the specific objective; for another, emphasis may be placed on organization and diction. Evaluation should get to the heart of the writing, to its content and expression, and not merely to the conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Too often, writing quality has been construed as mechanical correctness.

There are many ways to evaluate student papers. Probably the most common method includes the following steps: the student hands in a paper, and the teacher, without any discussion with the student, marks the faults in the paper, makes some terminal comments and assigns a grade, and returns the paper.

Other classroom strategies which involve students in the evaluation process and which can provide satisfying responses to student writing are discussed below. This list is certainly not exhaustive; there are many variations possible.

The purpose of evaluation should be to improve students' skills as writers and editors, decrease writing anxiety and elicit realistic self-appraisal, and enable teachers to assign more writing without being overwhelmed by papers to "correct and grade."

Holistic scoring. Holistic scoring is based on the idea that the whole composition is greater than the sum of its components, that no components may be judged apart from the whole, and that all components should be judged simultaneously. Holistic scoring involves reading and scoring a paper on the total effect it has on first impression. It may be that clarity, forcefulness of expression, and originality will outweigh errors in punctuation, spelling, and grammar to create a positive impression. Or, it may be that errors in syntax and mechanics may predominate to the point of obscuring the meaning and producing a negative impression of the paper.

Holistic scoring involves a team approach. Scorers first read and analyze the topic on which a set of papers has been written. They then read and discuss a sample of those papers and establish some standard or rubric by which the particular set of compositions may be scored excellent, good, fair, or poor, after which they proceed with scoring the entire set of papers. Each paper is read by at least two evaluators, who independently score the paper on the scale which has been selected.

Holistic scoring, unlike analytical scoring, does not provide for the correction of errors and the writing of comments. It is, however, a valid way of scoring large sets of compositions.

Holistic scoring can be easily and profitably adapted to the classroom. Engaging students in holistic scoring of papers written on a given topic can be doubly beneficial: the students become increasingly aware of what makes good writing, having helped to prepare the rubric, and, in addition, they benefit by reading and scoring other students' papers, profiting from both the superior paper and the poor paper.

For this method students first write on the topic themselves. Second, they help build a rubric (with some teacher assistance, of course—their natural inclination is to overemphasize mechanics). Third, they read the papers and score them. When sufficient time has elapsed so that each student has read several papers, class time can valuably be used to discuss their observations about the papers, particularly relevance to the topic, clarity of expression, diction, and organization. A survey of the degree of consensus of scores assigned by the students can be performed. (See chapter 6 for a sample rubric.)

Class assessment. The teacher reads selected compositions aloud to the class; the focus is to assess how well the writers succeeded with the requirements of the assignment. Papers should be chosen to demonstrate favorable points and illustrate positive examples. Students may write down their observations as to how the papers illustrated the objectives of the assignment; they may rate the papers as excellent or needing improvement; they may indicate what made a paper excellent or where additional work was needed. Discussion of specific elements can follow. When students note errors, it is important for them to show how they may be remedied.

Teacher reading, correcting, and grading. This common method, as previously noted, involves the time-honored practice of "careful analytical marking" of papers, assigning a letter grade (and sometimes two, one for content and one for mechanics),

and returning the paper to the student. Some hard questions need to be asked about this method of evaluation. Assessing a grade for the report card (and parents) is necessary, but the primary goal of a writing teacher is to teach students how to improve their writing. The writing teacher needs to ask if this method really works to *improve* student writing.

There are modifications of this grading procedure, any one of which can work effectively to enhance student writing, classroom atmosphere, and student acceptance of writing goals. In the first place, the teacher needs to accept the fact that not all writing needs to be completely analyzed, corrected, and graded. Some other possibilities:

1. Read and write comments and record that the work has been completed.
2. Read and focus on one or two elements only. Mark or grade, for instance, only for authentic voice, use of transitions, clarity of description, etc. Make clear to students that the evaluation covers only those points.
3. Skim to identify the most frequently made errors in the class and then use class time to identify and work on them.

Other evaluation strategies. In addition, the following strategies, discussed under "Revision Techniques," may be adapted for use in evaluation:

1. Tape-recorded response
2. Individual trading
3. Class exchange
4. Outside reaction
5. Editing groups
6. Conferences. As an evaluating activity, conferences can be most helpful in clarifying the reasons for a grade and can direct students to certain difficulties which could be avoided in their next writing project.

4 WAYS TO HIGHLIGHT STUDENT WRITING

Writing, whether it results from the full application of the writing process, from some in-class practice activity, or from the personal jottings in a journal, deserves some life beyond the letter grade. Yet we've all had the experience of seeing the returned set of compositions over which we labored long and tediously delayed on their way to the wastebasket only long enough for the writers to check the grades. Writing is not being valued much there, is it?

To underscore the importance of writing, to get students to value their work more highly (and maybe even to work more diligently, both in first draft and revision), and to give school writing a half-life of at least the months remaining till June—these fine goals are amenable to teachers' planning for the composition classroom. We'd suggest three approaches for highlighting student writing so as to gain the ends of value and permanence.

The Writing Folder

A first step would be to establish an in-class work file where every student has a folder containing work in progress, completed full-process projects, journal and timed writing entries, composition lessons and activities, and pieces to be revisited later. Certainly all graded papers will be in the file for review at student conference time.

There are several advantages to the writing file, not the least being the positive statement it makes about the value of students' work. The file maintained over the year is a dramatic demonstration of the attention given to writing in the English class, and, when viewed at home at the end of the year, shows parents clearly what the class has accomplished. More immediately, it allows comparisons, tracking of progress, and identification of specific writing problems. And, most important, the file provides access to materials students may need to return to, materials to be reviewed or reworked and skill and process activities already undertaken.

Practical problems do occur, including the problem of getting enough file folders. Students have to be reminded, again and again, to do their filing. If filing cabinet space is short, you may need to schedule a department meeting where you construct plywood countertop file boxes or convert cardboard boxes into files. But the effort is worth it. The work file can be an extraordinarily valuable adjunct to your work with process in the writing classroom, a possession of pride for the student at the end of the year, and a source of information for parent and student conferences.

The Reality Principle

Too often school is viewed as an unreal world by the students. The work there is not seen by the students to be real work; compositions, for example, are seen as mere exercise, even as pointless exercise. But there can be a reality to what goes on in the composition classroom, if the teacher has the energy and the imagination to exploit it. The challenge is to make the writing activity really count for something beyond the grade in the class.

An obvious way is to pose composition assignments which are real communications with real audiences with the chance, anyway, of a real response. The bottom line, of course, is actually dispatching the documents to the intended audience, with the hope that the readers will respond to the intent of the pieces rather than criticize some failure to achieve perfection. This last problem argues strongly for working with drafts until relatively competent, error-free documents result.

A few of the possibilities for real communications from students are listed below:

public opinion letter
letter to editor

letter of appreciation
school progress report
pen pal program
petition to the principal
letter of inquiry
fan letter
summary of class work
classroom correspondence exchange

One particularly important way to establish the "reality" of writing is to set up student writing to and for parents, for example end-of-term report letters allowing students to report in detail on what they've been doing as a class and how well they've done as individuals. For the teacher, working with the student on revising these reports allows for a fruitful dialogue about the class. For the parents, such a letter becomes an important supplement to the report card's letter grade. And for the student, motivation for such a project is almost always high. When it isn't, you have a signal of another kind of problem. And when students inquire if they may copy the report for a grandparent or aunt, the real-world significance of the writing seems assured.

One can create a sense of reality within the composition classroom if each activity is connected in some meaningful way with another, and if writing is shared with classmates, either for pleasure or for helpful critiques. Each project becomes more significant when a journal entry leads on to a fuller development in an essay, when serious attention to how to write a personal essay leads to a passing score on the high school competency test, when strong effort in revision and editing gets the piece into a class anthology, when a well-written draft gets both praise and solid writing advice from colleagues in an editing group, or when close attention to fine-tuning a paper for a specific audience will pay off in a major project next semester in connection with a novel to be read then. The composition teacher is well advised to exploit these connections.

The school as an institution involves a great deal of "real" writing. Typically, however, students do almost none of the institutional communication and explanation; an occasional announcement or a piece in a student publication would be the only likely exception. Our proposition here is that much more of the institutional writing in a school be done by the students—daily bulletins, communiqués to parents and students, news and opinion in the PTA newsletter, the school column in the local paper, news releases to the press. Clearly, having students write these pieces entails supervision from someone who really knows writing and students.

For some students the simulation of reality is sufficient motivation. If the form comes from the real world, they will accept its application to a classroom writing situation. If people really keep journals of trips they take, then students may willingly, even enthusiastically, develop a simulated journal for a wagon train trip westward, circa 1846, for their history class. If people really write gossipy letters, students will produce the form in the personae of characters in a novel they're reading for literature. Simulations for all subject areas can be built around the forms listed in chapter 2.

Publishing—Making Writing Public

Publishing, in the broad sense of making the writing public, is a third avenue to be used in making writing count, by acknowledging its importance as genuine communication. Publishing in this sense ranges from reading partners sharing a rough draft to the appearance of a student piece in a national journal with a fee paid. One caveat—the student, of course, has the privilege of retaining privacy in special cases.

When a piece is revised so that it may be ***highlighted*** (or published), the student will be more interested in getting it right. Highlighting will make the writing real to the students, no longer a barren exercise just to be turned in to the teacher. It can be standard operating procedure in the classroom for all (or almost all) finished papers to be spotlighted in some way, even if the teacher may have to forsake comprehensive artistic arrangements around the room for the sake of getting student work displayed. Besides, when students themselves arrange their work on the walls, cupboards, and windows, the room then becomes ***their*** room, their space; they sense ownership of the environment.

The classroom and the school offer many places to post written work so others may view it, including the classroom bulletin board, windows, doors, and cabinet fronts; the walls of the library; and space in the school office. These displays can range from most students' routinely posting some phase of most writing projects to very studied, painstakingly prepared displays that carry a message about

how these students are learning to write and that use carefully selected material. We recall bulletin boards prepared for the district office that focused on the steps in the writing process and on means for achieving coherence in writing, both of which featured well-edited student papers. There, students' work was conveying its message just outside the superintendent's office. But we also remember short poems and samples of figurative language printed on four-by-six-inch cards and displayed on a classroom clothesline.

The easiest and one of the best forums for making writing public is oral reading in the English classroom—by the writer, by the teacher, by a fellow student to the class or to some part of it. The reading can occur either with or without comment, critique, and writer response.

Publishing can mean having students' writing printed and distributed, as well. A simple, very satisfying classroom publication is the class anthology. Each member of the class (and the teacher, too) contributes a final draft, perhaps illustrated. Then a title page and a table of contents are added, and a way to fasten them all together devised—and presto, you have a class book, to be read by students and by visitors. At the end of the year, we break the anthologies apart and return the papers to their authors.

Another step in complexity is either the creation of books by individual students or the submission of shorter, school-written pieces to a school literary magazine or newspaper, a community publication, or a journal of wider distribution. Writing contests are also possibilities, when they are available and when the teacher has time to consult with entrants. Students need to understand and be prepared to meet the strictures of topic and rule.

It is important to keep in mind that students need to be protected by their teacher from invasion of privacy, from unauthorized publication, from the "publishing" of inferior, and therefore embarrassing, efforts, and from harsh and unreasonable criticism. They need more buffering from remote audiences than they do from familiar ones. But most students, most of the time, will thrive under publication.

5 WRITING TO LEARN IN THE CONTENT AREAS

Writing has long been used in the content fields, particularly as a way of reporting (essay, report), of recording (taking notes), and of testing. These are certainly legitimate applications of writing, ones we would expect to see continue. Both contemporary theory and practice, however, would suggest that writing can make further significant contributions in the learning process, that writing which encourages the writer to develop his or her own knowledge of a subject can activate thinking and stimulate the best kind of learning. Here we will focus on the applicability of writing to learning in social studies and in the humanities, but we are sure that the principles would apply to learning in other school subjects as well.

At the outset we want to argue for the utility of writing in the service of learning. Writing across the curriculum is not a subterfuge to diversify the responsibility for teaching students to write. It is not a plot by the English teacher to get the history teacher to do the English teacher's job. However, subject matter teachers using writing as a learning tool should expect to teach their students how to write to learn, how to make the connections between the writing they do and what they're expected to know. As a matter of fact, teachers in content areas should even expect to have to instruct their students in report writing and essay-test taking if they want their students to perform such acts well.

Background

In the seminal work in this matter, the Schools Council Research teams under James Britton at London University reported that in spite of the wide possible range of function and audience in writing, school writing was almost entirely transactional (writing that informs, explains, records) and almost entirely directed to the teacher as examiner or to a teacher-learner dialogue. Expressive writing (writing that is thinking written down, exploratory writing, dealing with feelings, moods, and opinions) was largely absent from the school scene. The range of audience, from oneself at one end to a remote public at the other, was for the most part unexplored. Yet the logic of learning theory, of human behavior study, and of linguistics argues for the implementation of the full range of writing function and audience to enhance learning opportunities. Hence work here and in England sought to apply expressive writing, directed to a broad range of audiences, to learning in the content courses, with impressive results. More recently, the NCTE collection *Roots in the Sawdust* has offered teachers in all the disciplines a variety of specific techniques using writing to increase comprehension.

Writing, whether poetic, expressive, or transactional, can become the concrete embodiment of thinking; in fact, thinking is often accomplished in the *act* of writing. So teachers in all subjects, including language arts and English, can use writing as a methodology for teaching students to think as well as for helping them learn the concepts and facts of the subject itself. The very nature of the writing activity demands the application of thinking skills.

For example, we see writing functioning as a concrete extension of basic thinking processes. Writing is an important way for students to discover, recall, organize, classify, connect, generalize, or evaluate. Young people deserve to know how to make writing serve them as a learning tool. Moreover, since writing is clearly one of the primary creative modes for human artistic expression, the full writing program needs to encourage student experimentation with imaginative work as a legit-

imate function of writing, possibly for the pleasure of others, but certainly for the writers' own satisfaction.

Using the following student writing assignments as samples, consider how the writing commands the thought process:

1. ***Explain*** for a fifth-grade audience how a dictionary etymology works.
2. ***Argue*** for or against the use of ***Flowers in the Attic*** (or some other controversial title) as a required class reading by writing a letter to a school board member who is considering whether to adopt it.
3. ***Analyze*** how Jem felt regarding the Mrs. Dubose incident in ***To Kill a Mockingbird*** by composing his letter to his favorite uncle in Boston.
4. ***Invent*** a thirteenth labor for Hercules to be included in a class anthology of creative and analytical pieces following a study of Greek mythology.
5. ***Evaluate*** your own experiences in English class by writing a report letter to your parents about your quarter's work and your own performance in it.

Writing as Discovery

Essential to the concept of writing as discovery is the idea that thought needs to be verbalized to become real, that one doesn't know what he or she knows till it is written down. The academic application of this idea, accomplished usually with surprising and gratifying results, is to have learners at the start of a unit of study write freely for a short period about what they know of the subject, what connections they can make, and what questions and uncertainties they have. (See the section on prelearning logs in chapter 1.)

There is hardly a better way to establish readiness for the lessons to follow. The learners discover that they do already know something, they become keenly aware of what they don't know, and they struggle for a personal connection with the content, even if initially it's only a sense of confusion.

Writing to Learn

The primary methodology for writing to learn is the keeping of logs, in which students keep track of what's going on in a lecture, a demonstration, a reading assignment, a piece of literature, a film, or a TV program. But logs also involve the personalized tracking of the students' own involvement with the experience, thereby encouraging, even demanding, an active rather than a passive response. For example, the log-keepers would record what they understood, what seemed important, and what had happened, writing this record either during or after the activity. In addition, they would note what confused them, what pleased them, and what disturbed them.

Students can raise questions in their logs, and seek connections between the subject at hand and anything else in their experience. Questioning and seeking connections are the keys to the success of learning logs. Deciding what they still need to know and want to know leads learners to the really important answers. And finding connections by discovering that "A is like B" or "A has these similarities with B" makes the subject at hand both coherent and significant.

Keeping these learning logs is not easy, and students have much to learn to make this strategy productive for them. They have to be very active, as observers, as thinkers, and as writers. They have to be involved. The logs are really a device with which the students address themselves, and it is from their dialogue with themselves that the learning flows.

It is important that teachers read students' learning logs, since such reading offers several advantages. Logs provide important insights into how the teaching and learning in the class are going. The logs, as they highlight the problems and the questions that many students are raising, offer important targets for direct reteaching. The logs also give teachers a useful opportunity to engage in dialogue with students by responding to what they are saying and thinking, and teachers' interest in the logs establishes them as important to the students. Reading and responding to the logs, however, is not the same as grading them.

Several specific possibilities for learning logs have been tried successfully.

Daily logs. Ask one or two students to write an objective record of what was said, done, and assigned in a particular class period and make that record available to all students. It may be put on tape for listening and for review at the end of the unit of study.

Reading logs. After reading (a textbook chapter, a piece of literature, or a news article, for example),

the students record their responses in expressive writing, responses both to the content of the piece and to their own experience in reading it.

Note taking/note making/note sharing. This prewriting activity is especially useful in classes where initial instruction or a lecture is given by the teacher, such as in science or history. Students divide their papers in half. On the left side of the paper they take notes on what the teacher says. On the right side, students take a few minutes to write their responses and questions about the notes and lecture. This activity clarifies thought, focuses questions, and can be the basis for discussion. Writing a summary of these notes can then be a homework or classroom activity. Finally, note sharing can take place during which each student gives his or her summary to another student, and, without talking, students then correct, clarify, and improve in writing what their partners have written in the note-making step.

Learning logs. This activity consists of asking students one or more questions about the learning that occurred in a given period. Suggested questions follow:

What did you learn today?
What confused you?
What questions do you still have?
How would you use that information?
What did you like about the lesson? Why?
What would you improve? How?
What was the point of the lesson?
What connections can you make?

A sample from an art class follows.

Questions: What did you learn today in class?	What questions about the information do you still have?
"That you have control of the clay, you can't let the clay dominate you. By making the clay the shape you want, and eventually sanding it down you can come up with anything your imagination comes up with."	"The only question I have about what I have learned is why does clay hold together as a form or a shape?"
"Sometimes when you wedge clay it doesn't dry as fast as most times. I also learned that I have got to get some extra credit or I will not pass today. No projects due after 22 of this month. Also some people say not to mix different clay and there is clay mixed together."	"Why can't clay be mixed together?"
"It is very difficult to make something with small moving parts because it is impossible to accurately predict shrinking."	"Would it be possible to make the moving part out of something other than clay? Would it be possible to make the handle clay with a top of a different material glued on?"
"Mark showed us his construction of his cowboy hat and told us that it shrank after being fired and that it wouldn't fit his longhorn's head."	"I want to know if the longhorn's head will shrink enough so that the hat will once again fit right. If not how do you go about making sure they'll still fit after being fired?"

Some specific suggestions for implementing a log activity are listed below:

1. The questions can be announced, posted, and/or read prior to the lesson.
2. Logs need not be done every day.
3. Students keep a record of their responses in one place (log, notebook), so they can refer back to the process of their learning.

4. Learning logs require only five to ten minutes at the end of the period.
5. Length should be about half a page.
6. Logs should be handed in before students leave the room.
7. Logs are not graded for mechanics, unless rewritten.
8. Credit can be recorded in the grade book as points or as +, >, −, or 0.
9. The teacher may read logs and respond the next day to student comments, summarizing logs or reteaching for clarification as needed.
10. Information in learning logs may be used for a more formal writing assignment or an exam.
11. Learning logs can increase the retention of material because they allow the assembly of many ideas into a few clear statements.

Writing to demonstrate learning. Here we will assume your familiarity with the report, the essay, the term paper, and the essay examination as ways to demonstrate learning by writing. We'll move on to look at some other possible ways for students to prove their knowledge by writing about the subject, but writing about it so that they are able to get something of themselves into that proof, to use a bit of the expressive in engaging in the transaction with the teacher.

Immersion project: The students are asked to undertake a relatively long, complicated project that involves research, organization, imagination, and a variety of kinds of writing.

> Example in geography: After their study of U.S. geography, students are asked to plan, research, and write the journal of an imaginary cross-country auto trip from a specified west coast city to one on the eastern seaboard. The features of the journal are as follows:
>
> 8–12 days in length
> 550-mile daily limit
> descriptions of countryside and weather
> observations of economic activity
> one visit to a national park
> one tour of a historic site
> one tour of an industrial site
> one adventure

Stance writing: The students are asked to deal with topics in the content area they are studying, adopting a particular voice, a specified audience, and some definite purpose for writing about them in an appropriate form.

> Example in history: Do research to present a report to the class as if you were a Revolutionary War personality. Your purpose is to describe and explain your behavior in the war to a skeptical group of late twentieth-century eighth graders, but to do it in such a way that they will appreciate and understand your role.

> Example in literature: After reading *Flowers for Algernon,* assume the role of Miss Kinnian. In a letter to her mother, explain her role in Charlie's rise and fall and explore her feelings about Charlie and what happened.

Turning research into historical fiction (by Kathy Russell, Area 3 Writing Project): Students do intensive research on a narrow subject related to the class curriculum and agreed to by the teacher. Instead of the typical "report," often full of plagiarism, students are directed to render their report in the form of historical fiction. They focus on a character, real or imagined, in the setting of the study, then convey their information in the form of a story, letter, dialogue, or some other appropriate form of discourse.

> Example: Do research into the life of Dr. Mudd in the post-Civil War hysteria surrounding the assassination of President Lincoln. Render what you find out about Mudd in the form of two of his letters to his family, one after his initial arrest and one while he was in prison. Come to grips with the question of his guilt or innocence.

Conclusive summary: At the conclusion of a learning activity, students are asked to do an expressive writing that comments on what

the experience meant to them—not only a rehearsal of facts or principles but also a statement of the learner's personal reaction.

It's useful to note after these samples of writing across the curriculum that the emphasis comes back again to process. Writing works because it involves the student in the process by which material in a content area becomes known. The emphasis has not been on a discrete body of factual and conceptual material that must be mastered. When expressive writing becomes a major tool, the emphasis shifts much more to how knowledge is organized, how it is connected, and how it is related to what the student already knows.

Writing to Test Learning

If writing is to be a basic tool for learning in the content fields, then it makes sense to use writing as a way to test that learning. If, however, the history or literature teacher does not use writing as integral to the instructional program, it may not be really fair to ask essay questions of the students at exam time. Since learning to deal with the essay question is a basic academic skill, however, it is important to provide much instruction and experience to those students with academic aspirations.

The essay question, particularly when it asks the student to use both knowledge and skills, can be a most useful kind of evaluation. Especially useful is the question that asks students to reorganize and apply what they've been learning.

Example in literature: Ask students who have completed their study of *To Kill a Mockingbird* to write as Scout Finch at fifteen. Ask that she recall what she learned from her experiences with each of the following:

Mrs. Dubose — Boo Radley
the mad dog — Miss Maudie
Calpurnia

Ask that the writer be specific as to how the experience was related to the "lesson."

Example in history or humanities: At the conclusion of a study of the Renaissance in western Europe, write a letter of introduction for a fictional Renaissance person, describing the person's capabilities, skills, educational background, and personal qualities.

Example in geography: As a test for their understanding of their study of famine in Africa, ask students to assume the role of a Food and Agricultural Organization expert who has been on the scene of the famine and write a report to a superior, making recommendations about how the problem of famine in the drought-stricken lands could be alleviated. The report is to address both an immediate response to the problem and possible long-range solutions.

Fundamental to the writing of essay responses as tests is the application of prewriting skills of development and organization. Providing sufficient time to produce both a rough and a revised draft would also reflect the process principles we've stressed in this handbook.

6 SOURCE FILE

Teachers develop their own repertoires of favorite teaching activities. Here we have collected a sample of practices for the teaching of writing that have worked well for us and for our classes. Prospective users would evaluate these ideas in terms of their own teaching styles, the nature of their classes, and their own instructional goals. They would need to fit the specific practices into their own process approaches to writing.

We have included written variations on the book report, some favorite composition activities, samples of editing and response forms, journal starters, and sentence-framing patterns.

Variations on the Book Report

The written book report has long been a stock-in-trade for the secondary school English teacher as a way to assess and credit the important independent reading that students do. Here we'd like to suggest some alternatives to the plot summaries and critical essays that have dominated the book report "genre."

The Reading Diary

Using the format of the learning log, students comment at the end of each reading session on both the substance of their reading and its effects upon them. Students will be learning how to make incisive summary comments, to respond to more than plot in a book, and to monitor their own reactions as readers.

Letter

When students finish their books, they are asked to create letters from the world of the story. They develop verisimilitude by designing a personalized letterhead that fits the story, they adopt the voice of a major character in the story, they aim at a specified audience (either some other character in the story, a character in another story, or the letter-writer him- or herself as an old friend), and they use the letter to rationalize or explain some set of actions in which the character was involved.

For example, for the reader of *Great Expectations*, Pip writes a letter to his old friend, the student, in which he describes his feelings about Magwitch at several points in the book and justifies those feelings. If he's feeling any guilt, for example, he would be willing to share that feeling with an old friend.

Super Book Report

The super book report asks the students to undertake several different written activities relative to their reading of the book. Since it's complex and difficult, this kind of report might be saved for late in the school year, when it could serve as a culmination to instruction in literature and writing. The activities could include such items as the following:

> As a *fact-finder*, fill in a questionnaire that asks for basic bibliographic data, a short character sketch of a major character, several one-sentence theme statements, an identification of point of view, and a one-paragraph description of the climactic event, all items of solid literary content.
>
> As a *salesperson*, prepare a four-minute audio- or videotaped sales presentation for the book, aimed at bookstore buyers. Do the presentation from notes; turn in the notes and the tape.
>
> As a *psychologist*, do a character analysis of one of the main characters in the book, trying to figure out what makes the character tick. Identify and comment on character qualities, using specific examples of behavior.
>
> As a *historian*, prepare a graphic time line of the ten most important events in the book. Keep the line to scale. Use both pictorial and verbal material.

As a *film director,* select one scene from the book and prepare a written plan for how you'd film it. Include details of setting, action, and casting, and a sample of the dialogue.

As a hard-to-please *critic,* write the three-hundred-word review your editor requested, praising where appropriate but being critical as well. Be specific and use some quoted material from the book.

(Implementation comments: The teacher's demonstrating each of these activities would give students something specific to aim for. Brainstorming or clustering would be important prewriting activities to insist on with several of these.)

News Format

A book with much action could be appropriately reported in a news format—a radio or television news script or a newspaper front page. The featured items could include write-ups of events, personalities, opinions, or predictions from the book. Recent coverage in local media could guide the students, and teaching about the various kinds of media presentations might also be necessary.

Interview

Student writers can also produce interviews (student with main character, main character with author, or student with author, for example). The presentation of each interview should include an introduction about the accomplishments, ideas, and background of the interviewee. It should also include a dialogue based on a series of questions posed by the interviewer to bring out the important features of the book. Each of these two activities needs a full prewriting exploration, and in revision the writer needs to attend to the natural sound of the dialogue. The interview could be set in a talk-show format.

Trial

The student writer can assume the role of prosecutor or defense attorney representing the book in a case involving one of the following propositions:

This book should replace _____ as a required work in English.

_____ should be removed from the class library.

_____ should be placed on the all-time favorite book list for teenagers.

The presentation could be the attorney's closing argument. If both sides were presented, the class could act as jury. This assignment requires argumentative writing; the clear assumption of a role, an audience, and a purpose; and a good understanding of the book.

Advertising Campaign

Students are asked to design advertising campaigns to promote the sale of their books. The campaign is to include the following elements:

a graphic poster

a thirty-second TV spot (consider script and visuals)

a magazine ad (four by eight inches)

a personal appearance by the author at a department store (provide a script for a three-minute book talk)

Students will need samples of all of these items to use as models.

Interior Monologue, Diary, Journal

The students assume the role of a character and write an interior monologue, diary, or journal. An interior monologue will be in present tense, written as the character moves through the event and recording what the character is thinking as events happen to him or her. A journal or diary will be written generally in past tense as the character reflects upon the events at a later time.

For example, after reading "Love of Life," by Jack London, students may prepare the journal (with ten entries) that the man might have written as he struggled to find food and to live. Ask the students to imagine that the journal was carried in his pocket all the while so it will look authentic when it is turned in. Imagine the students' delight (and their parents' wonder) when they insist on burning, tearing, or putting mud on their assignment!

Progress Reports

Have students prepare a series of progress reports. These might be written by the student or a person outside the world of the story as he or she reflects on the progress and development of a character. For example, the story "Charles," by Shirley Jackson, provides an excellent opportunity for students to write progress reports on the activities of Laurie (Charles). Use the format of your school's progress report form.

Game Board

Prepare a game board or sheet similar to the one shown. Students may choose one or more activities to complete, or they may roll dice or use a spinner as a way to select their assignments.

1. Create a greeting card that one character might send to another. Tell why it would be sent and the receiver's reaction.	2. Make a drawing of an object from the book which you think would be a symbol of one of the characters. Tell why you chose this object and how it is a symbol in the story.	3. The main character is to receive an award at a ceremony. Design the award and tell why the person is to receive it.
6. Choose a scene from your book and rewrite it as if it took place two hundred years in the past or two hundred years in the future.	5. Choose a scene from your book and rewrite it as if it took place in one of these locations: a. on a desert island b. in Antarctica c. n an ocean liner d. in a city you know well	4. You are a millionaire suffering from a fatal illness. You are trying to decide what to do with your money. Tell which character you would leave your money to and why.
7. You are a newspaper reporter covering an event as if you witnessed it.	8. You are a private detective assigned to follow the main character. Write a report on his or her activities for one period of time. Tell where he or she went, who he or she saw, and what he or she did.	9. You are a psychologist offering advice to the main character in your book. Tell what the problem is and what advice you would give.
		10. You are a fortune-teller. Predict the future for the main character. Give details of where he or she will be and with whom, and what will happen.

Postcard

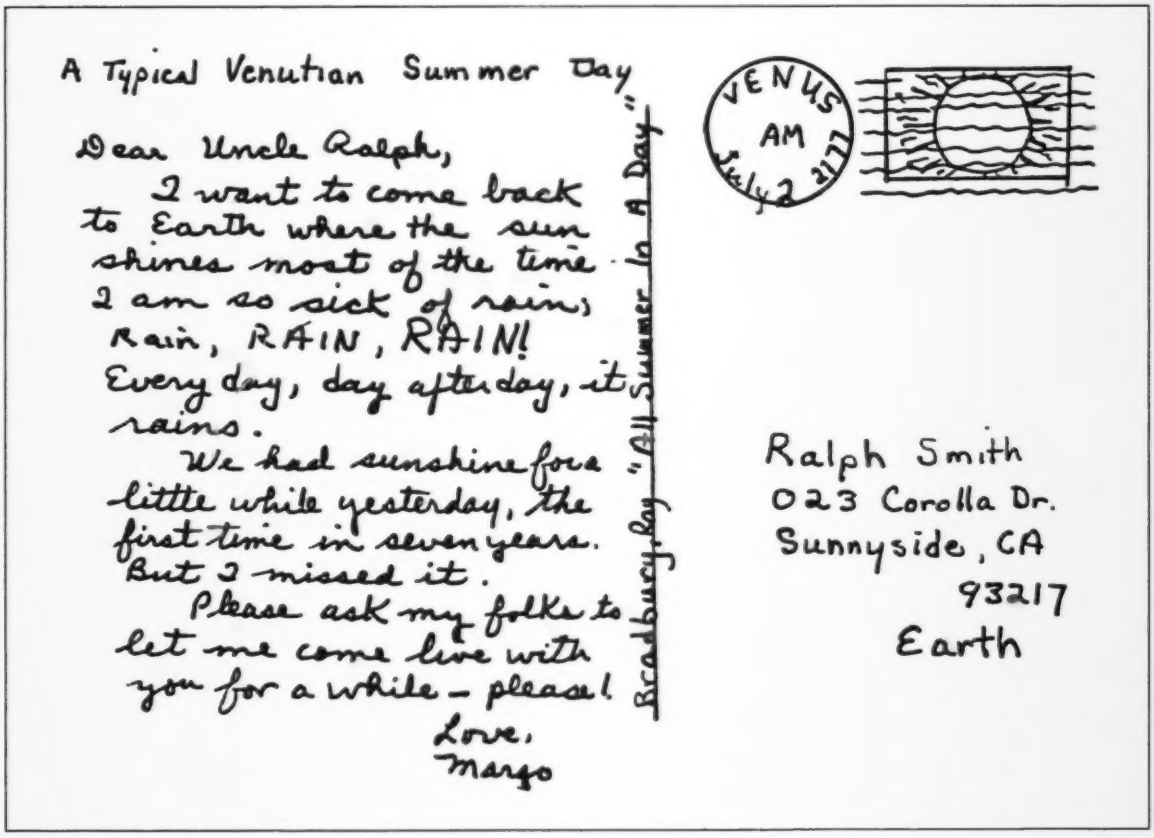
Students are to prepare a picture postcard and write a message from a principal character in the book addressed to themselves. The postcard is to include the following features:

1. A color illustration of a scene from the story on one side of the card
2. The student's name and address as the addressee
3. A stamp designed to be appropriate to the world of the story
4. A postmark (cancellation) with the date and place appropriate to the world of the story
5. The author and title (underlined) of the book printed vertically between the message and address spaces
6. A brief sentence or phrase at the top of the message area which describes the scene
7. A message addressed to the student conveying something important from the story
8. The signature of the character from whom the message comes

A suggested evaluation of the postcard assignment can be found among the sample editing and response forms in this chapter. Below is an example of the message side of the postcard.

Book Cards

Students may be required to prepare book cards for a certain number of books read each quarter. Tell them they should not write a card for a book they did not like, nor are they necessarily expected to write a book card for each book they read. Prepare a wall poster with the book card format to be used for the quarter. The format will remain basically the same for each quarter, but the information required will vary. Cards should be collected every


A Typical Venutian Summer Day
Dear Uncle Ralph,
I want to come back to Earth where the sun shines most of the time. I am so sick of rain; Rain, RAIN, RAIN! Every day, day after day, it rains.
We had sunshine for a little while yesterday, the first time in seven years. But I missed it.
Please ask my folks to let me come live with you for a while - please!
Love,
Margo
Bradbury, Ray "All Summer In A Day"
VENUS
AM
July 2 2177
Ralph Smith
023 Corolla Dr.
Sunnyside, CA
93217
Earth

three weeks or so, not all at the end of the quarter or marking period.

All cards may be filed in alphabetical order by title in a file box and will give ideas to students who are searching for something to read. They can look up what other students had to say about a book. This will encourage students to talk about books with one another.

Below are samples of forms which may be used:

BOOK CARD
Form A

Title _____ Name _____

Author _____ Date _____

Number of pages___ Rating given _____ (Super, OK, etc.)

Use complete sentences:

1. Tell when and where the action in the book takes place.
2. Tell what is the strongest *or* weakest part of the book.

Form B

1. Briefly tell what the book is about.
2. Name a person (living or dead) you would recommend read this book and tell why you chose this person.

Form C

1. Tell something worthwhile you learned from reading this book.
2. What did the main character(s) value? Give an example.

Form D

1. List the main characters and tell a bit about each one.
2. Record your personal reaction to the book.

Form E

1. Did the main character(s) change from the beginning to the end of the book? If so, how? If not, why not?
2. Complete this sentence: I found this book to be _____ (adj.) and _____ (adj.) because _____ . (You may not use "interesting" or "exciting." Check the thesaurus or dictionary for other descriptive words.)

Form F

1. List three important facts or events in your book.
2. Tell whom you would cast (from TV or the movies) to play the major roles in the book.

Thematic Report Form

A sample book report form on the theme of "the outsider" follows. It contains specific instructions for writing the report and for the critique that would follow. This form, with a few adaptations, could effectively work for reporting on reading related to other themes, such as courage, adventure, conflict, the search for identity, etc.

Book Report: "The Outsider"

On a separate sheet of paper, prepare a report on a book you have read that tells of someone who might be considered an "outsider." Follow these instructions:

1. Write your name, date, and class period on the right-hand side of the paper at the top.
2. Write the title of the book, the author, and the number of pages on the upper left-hand side.
3. Consider in a minimum of four paragraphs the following questions. Be explicit and detailed.
   a. Who is the outsider in this book? Tell something about the character and personality of the outsider.
   b. Why is he or she an outsider? What were the circumstances that caused him or her to become an outsider? What are his or her emotions about the situation?

c. Does the outsider become reconciled or content to be an outsider or do circumstances change? If so, how? What, then, are his or her emotions?
d. Include a brief selection from the book (it does not have to be a direct quotation of someone speaking) which explores the feeling of being an outsider.

4. This report should be one to two pages long. Your first draft will be shared in editing groups and is due _____. Announcement of the due date of the final copy in ink or typed will be made at the time of editing. The final report will be evaluated using the critique sheet below.

Critique Sheet

	Possible Points
1. Name, date, and period on right side of paper	5
2. Title, author, and number of pages on left side	5
3. At least four paragraphs, properly indented	5
4. Sufficient information on:	
a. who the outsider is	10
b. why that person is an outsider and the circumstances	10
c. whether circumstances change and how	10
d. selection from book exploring feelings of outsider	10
5. Spelling, punctuation, grammar, legibility, and overall appearance	20
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	75

Favorite Composition Activities

Included here are some favorite composition projects which did not fit elsewhere in this handbook. Notice that they tend to involve most of the steps in the writing process and that they generally require students to assume some kind of stance toward their material.

Place Poem

Students in an American studies class, during their study of geography, are asked to pick a favorite familiar place, one about which they feel strongly. Using a Whitman excerpt from *Leaves of Grass* about New York City as a model, the students identify physical detail, climate, and human activity as the content elements, and free, unrhymed lines with a refrain at the end as poetic elements. They are asked to cluster to the three content elements by thinking in detail about their places, then to write a rough draft poem of fourteen or more lines. After the teacher demonstrates critiquing this kind of writing by discussing a rough draft he or she has prepared with the whole class, small groups critique one another's poems, looking for their match with the model, for concrete detail, and for personal involvement with the place. Final drafts are prepared in ink or typed, and then illustrated for presentation in a class anthology.

A Crystal Moment

This creative-writing exercise, by Linda Preston, of the Area 3 Writing Project, involves first reading with the class and discussing the Robert P. Tristram Coffin poem, "Crystal Moment." Have students brainstorm about their own crystal moments, when some experience came together for them in some powerful insight or meaning of glory and beauty. The teacher then might share a crystal moment of his or her own, going into some detail about the experience itself and specifically stating the insight gained.

Each student then selects one from his or her discoveries, does a clustering for the details of the experience, and prepares a draft. Revision could then follow partner critiques focusing on the quantity and quality of details and the wording chosen to present them. "Crystal Moments" make an excellent public display in a school library or some other heavy-traffic area at school. Even a community display might be sought. Writers retain the privilege of not displaying their pieces if their moments are too intimate for exposure.

Crystal Moment

Once or twice this side of death
Things can make one hold his breath.

From my boyhood I remember
A crystal moment of September.

A wooded island rang with the sounds
Of church bells in the throats of hounds.

A buck leaped out and took the tide
With jewels flowing past each side.

With his high head like a tree
He swam within a yard of me.

I saw the golden drop of light
In his eyes turned dark with fright.

I saw the forest's holiness
On him like a fierce caress.

Fear made him lovely past belief,
My heart was trembling like a leaf.

He leaned towards the land and life
With need upon him like a knife.

In his wake the hot hounds churned,
They stretched their muzzles out and yearned.

They bayed no more, but swam and throbbed,
Hunger drove them till they sobbed.

Pursued, pursuers reached the shore
And vanished. I saw nothing more.

So they passed, a pageant such
As only gods could witness much,

Life and death upon one tether
And running beautiful together.

Robert P. Tristram Coffin

Editorial

This assignment asks students to assume the stance of a newspaper editor in some prominent U.S. town at the time of a major historical event the class has studied, for example the Articles of Confederation, in 1786.

Prewriting will have to deal with the particular nature of the editorial as a form, perhaps a strengths-weaknesses listing about the Articles of Confederation, and some consideration of the language of argument and persuasion.

Postwriting response would be in the form of a partner response to the editorial on the yes-no questionnaire and advisory that follows.

Assignment: Write an editorial about the operation of the national government under the Articles of Confederation. In your editorial, state a clear opinion about the adequacy of the Articles, support your opinion with detailed facts and observations, and suggest a course of action for the new nation. Be accurate with facts.

Questionnaire: Read the editorial to answer these questions.

1. Does the editorial have a title? _____
2. Does the editorial clearly state a problem with the Articles of Confederation? _____
   What problem? _____
3. Does the writer take a position on whether the Articles are sufficient? _____
4. Is the editorial organized into at least three paragraphs? _____
5. Does it mention the problem of too little central authority? _____
6. Does it mention that the U.S. was not paying its bills and debts? _____
7. Does it mention the problem the U.S. had protecting its property? _____
8. Does it mention that the national government was depending on the states to meet their expenses? _____
9. Does it use Shays's uprising as an example? _____
10. Does it mention the problem of trade between the states? _____
11. Does it use as an example that each state taxed foreign trade in a different way? _____
12. Does it suggest the problem of other countries losing respect for the U.S.? _____
13. Does it mention the "one country or thirteen" argument? _____
14. Does the editorial clearly call for some action to solve the problem? _____
    What action? _____

Advisory: What two pieces of revision advice would you give the writer?

1. _____
2. _____

Create a Magazine

This project by Susan Erwin, Vacaville, California, asks each group of students (perhaps preselected for a similarity of interest) to select a subject for a magazine they will create (for example, a tech-

nical area, fashion, popular music, a scientific field, a sport, a fad, satire, literature, art, etc.). In a specified time period, the students plan, write, design, and produce a magazine. Students will need to consider the following elements: cover, table of contents, columns, contests, articles, fiction stories, interviews, display ads, classified ads, letters, editorials, reviews, cartoons, illustrations. Not all elements would be required. Each group would be expected to work through the necessary series of decisions: (1) assignments; (2) editing; and (3) design, to produce a finished product. Every group member would be expected to produce copy, and each group would be responsible for its own pre- and postwriting sequences.

The final copies of the magazines would be shared among the class members and would likely be of interest to other students in the school. The magazines could be circulated as widely as possible, or they could be sold for enough to pay for the copying cost. Other projects of this kind include creating a holiday, a holiday gift book (effective also as an individual project), a game, or a product.

Comparative Interior Monologues from Literature

When students complete their reading of the trial chapters in ***To Kill a Mockingbird,*** have them create two interior monologues to get at contrasting views of the trial, which the readers see only through the persona of young Scout Finch. Possible contrasting pairs of voices would be

Jem and Tom Robinson
Atticus and Mr. Gilmer
Mayella Ewell and Mr. Underwood

Getting these voices right would be a writing challenge, as would deciding how these people would have felt about the conduct of the trial and the verdict.

Prewriting might well include some sample role-playing conversations among the pairs, followed by discussion of what in the "play" seemed right. Postwriting critiques could appropriately be done in small groups composed of people who had selected the same pairs. Publication might include a reading by students who had selected other pairs in a large-group exchange, or the papers could be offered to another class which had read the novel but not done the assignment.

President Report

This history project, by Lyle McBee, Davis, California, asks that after doing intensive reading and research into the life of an American president, students prepare their reports based on the following plan:

1. Early life: Assume the stance of the president on his inauguration day. Record his reminiscences about his early years in a journal entry that includes the following: personal qualities displayed as a youngster, school days, who his parents were and what they were like, who the other members of his family were, childhood experiences, and places lived.
2. Career before presidency: Assume the stance of a politician introducing the presidential candidate during his campaign. Your introduction should include accomplishments achieved and positions held prior to his candidacy, special qualities people saw in him, why people considered him a strong candidate, the composition of his family.
3. Presidency: Assume the stance of the newspaper writer who writes about the president's career in the obituary to be published after his death. Include information about why he ran for president, major decisions he made, how historians saw his term of office, what national and world problems existed during his term, and what unusual events occurred.
4. Life after presidency: Assume the role of a relative writing a chapter for the president's biography. This chapter about his life after he left office will include information about positions held, special recognition received, places lived and trips taken, other accomplishments as an elder statesman.

Prewriting here will necessarily involve the management of extensive notes, so teaching the note card system with its possibility for sorting might be useful. The president reports would make a fine class anthology when the final drafts are in hand.

Sample Editing and Response Forms

Rubric

Rating	Criteria
4 = Excellent	clear, concise sentences varied sentence structure descriptive details correct mechanics and paragraphing special flair (uses imagination) superior diction (effective word choice) effective use of transition focus on topic good organization
3 = Good	focus on topic some transitions mechanical problems that do not interfere with readability clear, concise sentences some details or imagination adequate organization appropriate paragraphing
2 = Fair	lack of organization partial development of topic usually complete sentences mechanical errors that interfere with readability faulty paragraphing
1 = Poor	little or no organization inadequate length and underdevelopment many mechanical problems loss of focus on topic
0 = Unacceptable	inappropriateness illegibility no focus on topic blank page

"A Memorable Meal"

Assignment: Write a description of a memorable meal you have had, being sure to convey your feelings and attitudes about the meal. Emphasize exciting, vivid language and use all five senses in the description.

Editing Sheet:

_____

Writer of Paper

_____

Editor (your name)

	4	3	2	1
1. Five senses included in the description.				
2. Feelings and attitudes about the meal included.				
3. Exciting, vivid language used to describe the meal.				

Total Points _____

4 = excellent
3 = good
2 = fair
1 = poor

"How to Study for a Test"

Assignment: Write your suggestions for "How to Study for a Test," being sure to use a thesis statement and supporting details, comparisons, and transitions.

Editing Sheet:

_____

Writer of Paper

_____

Editor (your name)

	4	3	2	1
1. Thesis is clearly stated.				
2. Paragraphs support thesis statement with details.				
3. Transitions are evident.				
4. One or more comparisons are made.				
5. Suggestions for studying are clear and precise.				
6. Spelling and punctuation are accurate.				

Total Points _____

4 = excellent
3 = good
2 = fair
1 = poor

Short Story

Assignment: Write a short story.

Editing Sheet:

_____ _____

Writer of Story Editor (your name)

_____

Title of Story

	Yes	No	Somewhat
1. Introduction: The introduction was striking and made me want to read on.			
2. Characters: The writing led me to have some feeling (sympathy, disgust, pity) about the characters.			
The writing gave sufficient information about the characters.			
What the characters said or did was consistent with their descriptions.			
3. Setting: Where and when the events take place was clear.			
4. Style: The writing style was interesting and consistent.			
Foreshadowing was evident.			
There were striking expressions, similes, and metaphors.			
5. Plot: The plot made sense sequentially.			
The conflict was intense, immediate, and clear.			
6. Tone: The tone of the writing was consistent with the plot and characters.			

Overall rating _____

4 = excellent
3 = good
2 = fair
1 = poor

An Imaginative Journey

Assignment: The teacher will lead you in an imaginative journey during which you will encounter various items—a cup, a key, a house. Write for five minutes immediately after each section and its series of questions. (For example: "You are in a forest. What are the sounds you hear? What do you smell? Write about the forest.")

Editing Sheet

_____

Author

_____

Editor (your name)

1. I thought the following section was the best and written in the most interesting style:

_____ description of forest

_____ description of cup

_____ description of key

_____ description of house and body of water

_____ other _____

2. I noted that the following areas need improvement:

_____ spelling

_____ punctuation

_____ sentence variety

_____ consistency of tense

_____ descriptive details

_____ other _____

_____ no problems

3. An *example* of one noteworthy phrase or sentence:

_____

4. An *example* of one problem needing improvement (if any):

_____

5. I would award this paper _____.

4 = excellent 3 = good 2 = fair 1 = poor

Revision Sheet

Read your own paper. Then do the following.

1. Count the number of sentences in your paper. Record here. _____

2. List the first word in each of the first ten sentences.

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

3. If you find that you repeated the same first word too many times, make changes.

4. List the verbs in each of the first ten sentences.

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

5. Could you substitute more active verbs? If so, do.

"The New Kid"

Assignment: Read the story "The New Kid," by Murray Heyert, and write a summary. Then respond to another student's paper on the basis of these questions.

Yes-No Questionnaire:

1. Does the paper name the story by title? _____
2. Is the title of the story placed in quotation marks? _____
3. Does the paper indicate that the story took place in a large city? _____
4. Does it identify the story as taking place in the 1940s? _____
5. Does it name Marty as a main character? _____
6. Does the paper indicate that Marty was at the bottom of his group, picked on by all the other kids? _____
7. Does it indicate that the kids try to keep Marty out of their ball game? _____
8. Does it say that Marty treated the new kid the same way he'd been treated? _____
9. Does it suggest that the theme has to do with pecking order among humans, with how people put others down to make themselves feel better? _____
10. Does the paper say the story is told from a third-person, major-character point of view? _____

Postcard Evaluation

_____

Preparer of Postcard

_____

Evaluator (your name)

	Neat!	OK	Not So Good	Missing
1. Postcard picture				
2. Address				
3. Stamp				
4. Postmark				
5. Title and author of book				
6. Description of scene				
7. Message				

One outstanding thing on the postcard was _____

because _____.

One thing needing improvement was _____

because _____.

Overall rating: _____
(excellent, good, fair, poor)

Record of Papers Read during Class Exchange

Rating: 4 excellent
3 good
2 fair
1 poor

Name _____

Author	Something Memorable	Rating

The most outstanding paper I read today was by _____

for this (these) reason(s): _____

_____

_____

_____

Journal Starters

1. Describe a favorite toy you had as a child. What made you especially fond of it?
2. Describe the place where you feel (or have felt) most at home. What makes it a comfortable place for you?
3. Write a list of at least fifty things that make you feel good.
4. Describe the perfect day. Put in as many details as you can. Make it a possible day, not a "dream" day.
5. Describe a "dream" day. How is it different from a possible day?
6. Who is the person from history that you would most like to meet and talk to? Why? What would you like to ask?
7. Who is the person alive today that you would most like to meet and talk to? Why? What would you like to ask?
8. Who is the person from literature that you would most like to meet and talk to? Why? What would you like to ask?
9. Compile a list of words that describe you as a child. Compile a second list that describes you as you are now. How are these lists the same? How are they different?
10. Are you a noun or a verb? Give evidence.
11. Finish this thought: "If I could change one thing about myself . . ." (If you can't think of anything, you might consider telling how you got to be perfect!)
12. Write a minibiography using single words only, no phrases or sentences. (Born. Empty. Birthday. Four. Vague. Birthday. Five. Clearer. House. Pond. Hill. Kindergarten. Rhythm band. Sand table . . . and so on)
13. Compile a list of inanimate or animate objects to which you might compare yourself metaphorically. (I am a windmill. I change direction or my thoughts whenever someone talks to me . . .)
14. Describe an animal that you identify with strongly. Why do you have a special feeling about this animal?
15. Tell about what triggers anger in you or someone else.
16. Make a list of "I used to . . . but now . . ." statements. They need not be in any particular order or on any specific topic, but they should be true. Make another list of "I used to . . . but now . . ." statements. This list should be totally imaginative. Which list was more fun to make? What does this say about you?
17. Write about something that you wanted very much and perhaps worked long and hard for, but were unable to get. What were your feelings then? What are your feelings about it now?
18. Invent a monster and describe it. Tell where it lives, what it eats, and what it does.
19. What is your favorite kind of weather? Why?
20. Describe a time when you really felt fear. What made it a frightening time? How did you feel when it was over? (If you have never been afraid, what might frighten you?)
21. What is the best book you have ever read? Why did you like it? Did reading the book change you in any way? What way?
22. Write about what you *didn't* do this weekend.
23. Think of an incident that happened to you and exaggerate it in the telling. Make it into a tall tale.
24. If you were ruler of the world, what things would you banish absolutely for all time (rain on weekends, eggplant, and so forth)? Make a list. Use your imagination.
25. If you could go back in time anywhere and "anywhen," where/when would you go and why?
26. What law would you like to see enacted which would help people? How would it help?
27. What commercial on TV do you dislike beyond all others? What about it is particularly annoying to you?
28. What is your first vivid memory?
29. Design some gadget, machine, building, or other creation that might enrich future life. What does it looke like? What does it do? How does it function? In what ways might it benefit people?
30. What current fashion in clothing do you particularly like or dislike? Explain.

31. Convince someone why music or art or computers are important in your life. Make them appreciate your viewpoint.
32. If you had $100,000, how would you spend it?
33. Be a building you know well. Talk about your life and memories.
34. You are to tell a person from a distant planet or from another era what pollution is. Make that person understand what causes it and why it is bad.
35. If you were one inch tall, what are some of the things you would do that you cannot do now?
36. If you could do something that you've never done before, what would it be? Why would you want to do it?
37. Begin a list of questions that you'd like to have answered. They may be about the future or the past.
38. What do you consider your greatest accomplishment to date and why?
39. Write one characteristic or habit about yourself that you like and describe it. Or write about one thing you don't like about yourself.
40. What is your hobby? Why do you enjoy it?
41. If you could go somewhere you've never gone before, where would you go? Why?
42. List as many reasons as you can for putting "people" on the endangered species list.
43. You have been given the power to talk to animals. Which animal would you like to talk to? What questions would you ask?
44. Choose the first word that comes to mind and begin clustering. Where does your thinking take you?
45. What, if anything, would you be willing to fight or even die for? Explain your answer.
46. If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be? Why would you make this change?
47. Tell about a dream you have had. If you cannot remember a dream, create one. If you can, try to analyze the dream.
48. Is there any machine you feel you could not live without? Explain.
49. Write about what you think you will be like and what you will be doing ten or twenty years from now.

(List based on work by Dave Burmester, Davis, California)

Framing Patterns

Detail: Every time I'm out with Bill he does things to irritate me. For instance, _____. Another _____. Besides, _____. Frequently _____. Also, _____. Then _____. Finally _____. In spite of _____.

Examples: Something always happens to make Jane late for a meeting. Last evening, for example, _____. Just then _____. At the same time _____. Following that _____. In the meantime _____. Consequently _____. As a result _____.

Comparison: Your Uncle Jack often reminds me of my Uncle Bill. Both _____. Also, _____. In addition, _____. Likewise, _____. On the whole, _____. Again, _____. Similarly, _____. And yet _____.

Proof: Buildings, monuments, and statues tell the visitor that Washington, D.C., is a historic city. To begin with, _____. Just beyond _____. Then there _____. Perhaps the most _____. If one _____.

Opinion: Movies? Usually I don't like them. First of all, _____. Almost always _____. Also, _____. Usually I find _____. Another reason _____. In addition, _____. But my most serious objection _____. You may not agree, but in my opinion, _____.

Cause and effect: Relentlessly the flood waters rose, and at midnight the dam broke. Instantly, _____. Also, suddenly _____. At the same time, _____. Immediately, _____. Then _____. Here and there _____. Beyond _____. Also, _____.

Repetition: We always give a square deal to our customers. This means _____. In addition, we guarantee _____. Also, _____. You can rely _____. In fact, _____. To sum up, _____.

Definition: The truly courteous person is one who can best be defined by his or her actions. You will see _____. Always _____. No matter _____. Also evident _____. In every instance _____. To everyone _____. Even if _____. Indeed, _____.

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